

On This Date in Bahá'í Faith

SEPTEMBER

150 Historical Entries

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- 1** September 1. On this date in 1912, "The Oregonian" carried an article about 'Abdu'l-Bahá, introducing him as the "Leader of Religions Movement Which Claims Three Million Followers" and quoting his statement "When in London he was approached by a student of higher criticism who asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá..
- 2** September 1. On this date in 1921, the first Bahá'í public meeting was held in Seoul, with Agnes Alexander speaking. According to "Raising the Banner in Korea", "She was very surprised at the size of the audience, about 900 men and women sitting cross-legged on the matted floor listening intently.
- 3** September 1. On this date in 1935, Shoghi Effendi wrote "Bahá'u'lláh's message is thus the only key to a true understanding of the mysteries that envelop man's spiritual life."
- 4** September 1. On this date in 1975, the UHJ wrote "Ablutions are necessary for all three Obligatory Prayers. Reciting the words specified in the medium Obligatory Prayer pertains only to that prayer, i.e., for the short and long Obligatory Prayers it would be sufficient to wash one's hands and ..."
- 5** September 1. On this date in 1975, the UHJ wrote to someone who was "particularly disturbed by the punishments prescribed for certain offences, presumably those for theft, murder and arson. As is explained in Note 42 on page 64 of the 'Synopsis and Codification of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas' ..."
- 6** September 1. On this date in 1977, the UHJ addressed a letter "Concerning Hindu prophecies of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh and the relationship of the Hindu and Bahá'í Faiths."
- 7** September 1. On this date in 1983, the UHJ wrote the NSA of Norway about "meditation and kindred subjects. The House of Justice is aware that such matters have been a cause of differences of opinion among the Norwegian Bahá'ís," outlining six "essential requisites for our spiritual growth."

8 September 1. On this date in 1984, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar in Samoa was dedicated. Built at a cost of \$6,500,000, it was one of the achievements of the Seven Year Plan.

9 September 1. On this date in 2018, Ehsan Yarshater, the former Bahá'í scholar who was Hagop Kevorkian Professor Emeritus of Iranian Studies at Columbia University, died in California.

10 September 2. On this date in 1912, during his tour of North America, 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave a talk in the Montreal home of the Maxwells where he presented his views on native cultures, Africans, indigenous North Americans and pre-Columbian America.

11 September 2. On this date in 1959, the Custodians wrote new NSAs "Our attorney advises us that we should have a similar letter... 'We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith selected by the Hands of the Cause.'"

12 September 2. On this date in 1968, Ṭarāzu'lláh Samandarí, a Hand of the Cause of God, died in Israel. Born in Qazvin to a prominent Bahá'í family, he was the son of Kázim-i-Samandar, an Apostle of Bahá'u'lláh, and his grandmother had accompanied Ṭáhirih.

13 September 2. On this date in 1982, the UHJ addressed a letter "to the Friends gathered in the Asian-Australasian Bahá'í Conference in Canberra" noting "The institutions of the old world order are crumbling and in disarray. Materialism, greed, corruption and conflict are infecting the social order.

14 September 2. On this date in 1982, the UHJ sent a letter "to the Friends gathered at the Bahá'í International Conference in Montreal" noting "Seventy years ago 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited Montreal, hallowing it forever."

15 September 2. On this date in 1992, Shirin Fozdar died. Born to Zoroastrian parents who had converted to the Bahá'í Faith in Bombay, along with her husband, they were the first Bahá'í pioneers to Singapore. She was an inaugural member of the National Spiritual Assembly of South East Asia.

16 September 3. On this date in 1892, a few months after Bahá'u'lláh's death, Nabíl-i-A'zam, the author of "The Dawn-breakers", died. Parts of his body and clothing were found washed up on the coast in Acre. While Bahá'í sources attribute his death to suicide, other sources claim he was murdered.

17 September 3. On this date in 1912, an article in the Buffalo New York Enquirer titled "This is Baha'ism" stated "It has no organization, no hierarchy, no ritual, no fixed places of worship and times of meeting; in short, it is spirit and life. It does not seek to proselytize. You can be a Bahá'í w

18 September 3. On this date in 1912, a newspaper in London, Ontario, reported "The Bahá'í Revelation...is said to have already won more than 8,000 followers in America."

19 September 3. On this date in 2003, The Times of London carried an article about David Kelly's conversion to the Bahá'í Faith. An authority on biological warfare, he was a prime source for the false information of Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction ahead of the invasion in 2003.

20 September 4. On this date in 1981, the UHJ wrote the NSA of the US that believers do not need "copyright clearance before they may quote from the Sacred Texts" but there remains "the existing requirements for individual believers to submit their works on the Faith for review before publication."

21 September 4. On this date in 1982, the UHJ wrote an NSA reminding that "In the 'Kitáb-i-Aqdas' Bahá'u'lláh has stated: 'It is incumbent upon everyone to write his testament.'" When Shoghi Effendi died in London at the age of 60, he did not have a will.

22 September 4. On this date in 1984, an individual wrote the UHJ seeking "further clarification about the qualitative difference between the Guardian's prerogative of interpretation and the power of elucidation of the Universal House of Justice."

23 September 4. On this date in 2005, the UHJ wrote a letter "concerning the source of a statement about 20,000 [Babi] martyrs" given that "Some historians think the number of early Babi/Bahá'í martyrs was not 20,000, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi mentioned numerous times, but 2,000 to 3,000."

24 September 5. On this date in 1954, Shoghi Effendi wrote "it seems only intense suffering is capable of rousing men to the spiritual efforts required. It seems clear to any thinking person that war will be the main cause of this degree of suffering."

25 September 5. On this date in 1973, John Ferraby, a Custodian, died. His "All Things Made New", is notable for the changes made to it. The dedication of the book to "The First Guardian" changed to simply "The Guardian." References to "the Guardian" replaced with "the Universal House of Justice."

26 September 5. On this date in 1990, Emeric Sala, one of the first nine members of the NSA of Canada, died. In 1947, he received a letter from Shoghi Effendi stating "future Guardians: they cannot "abrogate" the interpretations of former Guardians, as this would imply not only lack of guidance ..."

27 September 6. On this date in 1934, Shoghi Effendi wrote "The highest standards of purity, of integrity, of detachment and sacrifice must be maintained by the members of your group in order to enable you to play a decisive part in the spread and consolidation of the Faith."

28 September 6. On this date in 1946, Shoghi Effendi wrote of "the paramount necessity for Bahá'í Youth to exemplify the Teachings, most particularly the moral aspect of them. If they are not distinguished for their high conduct they cannot expect other young people to take the Cause very seriously."

29 September 6. On this date in 1950, a warning was sent to British Bahá'ís about Joseph Perdu's having met Ahmad Sohrab.

30 September 6. On this date in 1957, two months before his death, Shoghi Effendi sent a cablegram announcing "Purification of Haram-i-Aqdas." This purification would later be completed by the UHJ with the removal of the remains of Bahá'u'lláh's son Mirza Díyá'u'lláh, which had laid beside his father

31 September 6. On this date in 2005, David Ruhe, a member of the Universal House of Justice from 1968 to 1993, died. According to one source, the Ruhi Institute was named after him as well as after the father of Farzam Arbab, who founded the Ruhi Institute and served on the UHJ from 1993 to 2013.

32 September 7. On this date in 1871, Mehmed Emin Âli Pasha, the Ottoman Grand Vizier behind the decision to exile Bahá'u'lláh and his companions from Edirne to Acre, died. In August 1868, Bahá'u'lláh had addressed his Súriy-i-Ra'ís and Lawh-i-Ra'ís to Alí Páshá.

33 September 7. On this date in 1908, Hasan Balyuzi, a Hand of the Cause of God, was born in Shiraz.

34 September 7. On this date in 1916, Tokujiro Torii, the first blind Japanese to learn Esperanto, wrote 'Abdu'l-Bahá a letter in Esperanto Braille. His letter "was the second letter to be sent from Japan to the Master."

35 September 7. On this date in 1962, the Custodians addressed a letter to the Hands of Cause of God about "the activities of the supporters of Mason Remey in Latin America."

36 September 8. On this date in 1916, the "Star of the West" magazine published the first five of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's "Tablets of the Divine Plan."

37 September 8. On this date in 1919, subsequent to the British occupation of Palestine, at a time when tens of thousands of Jewish settlers were arriving under the auspices of the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association, an article in the "Star of the West" quoted 'Abdu'l-Bahá praising Zionism.

38 September 8. On this date in 1964, the UHJ wrote "the beloved Guardian was not only a translator but the inspired Interpreter of the Holy Writings; thus, where a passage in Persian or Arabic could give rise to two different expressions in English he would know which one to convey."

39 September 8. On this date in 1968, one month after the Palermo Conference, the UHJ addressed a letter titled "All May Share Laurels of Accomplishment" noting "Those who cannot pioneer or do travel teaching will want to participate by contributing to the International Deputization Fund."

40 September 8. On this date in 1999, the UHJ wrote "As to the specific concern that prompted your inquiry, the use of funds from Huqúqu'lláh, the disbursement of which is entirely at the discretion of the Head of the Faith, entails a wide range of applications that will eventually address ..."

41 September 9. On this date in 1911, an article in the Boston Evening Transcript introduced "'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbas, the mysterious Persian prophet of the Bahá'í religion, which has, at a moderate estimate, three million followers."

42 September 9. On this date in 1950, a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to Glasgow Bahá'ís stated "he feels the Cause will find many exemplary and wonderful servants among the Scotch people...thus gradually free the devoted pioneers...for services in new and maybe distant fields."

43 September 9. On this date in 2006, "an author directly affected by the recent action of the National Spiritual Assembly regarding material marketed by Kalimát Press" addressed an email to the UHJ. The UHJ "upholds its decision in the matter" given the NSA's "disagreeing with Kalimát's agenda."

44 September 12. On this date in 1950, Shoghi Effendi wrote "My anguished heart...But for America's multitudinous services and unparalleled record of achievements my burden of cares both past and present would be unbearable...added weight of afflictions oppressing me at this hour."

45 September 13. On this date in 1885, Alain Leroy Locke was born. He was the father of the Harlem Renaissance, a Bahá'í, and an open homosexual who called his sexual orientation his "vulnerable/invulnerability," viewing it as a risk but also his strength.

46 September 13. On this date in 1927, George Jacob Augur died. An early American Bahá'í who converted in Hawaii, he was the first Bahá'í to pioneer to Japan and was named a Disciple of 'Abdu'l-Bahá by Shoghi Effendi.

47 September 13. On this date in 1962, the Custodians wrote about several NSAs' "urging the members of their community to use the Long Obligatory Prayer," noting "we feel that your National Assembly has exceeded the powers given to it in the Administrative Order."

48 September 13. On this date in 1968, an individual wrote the UHJ "making inquiry about instructions which may apply to organ transplants such as the heart or kidney." The UHJ replied "the Universal House of Justice does not wish to make any statements on these points at this time."

49 September 13. On this date in 1983, the UHJ cabled all NSAs regarding the Iranian government's banning the Bahá'í Administration on August 29, 1983, noting the government's statement permitted Bahá'ís to "practice beliefs as private individuals provided they do not teach or invite others to ..."

50 September 13. On this date in 1998, the UHJ wrote that "One of the tasks of the Representatives is to assist in educating the believers in the law of Huqúqu'lláh and its importance."

51 September 14. On this date in 1932, a letter was addressed to Adelbert Mühlischlegel noting that "Shoghi Effendi has not yet returned from his summer vacations," as he would leave Haifa for months at a time for rest and relaxation in the Swiss Alps.

52 September 14. On this date in 1948, Shoghi Effendi cabled the NSA of Germany stating "DISOBEDIENCE MISCONDUCT FAITHLESS BROTHER HUSSAYN NECESSITATED HIS EXPULSION...ASSOCIATION WITH COVENANT BREAKERS WARN BELIEVERS ANY COMMUNICATION WITH HIM CONSTITUTES DISLOYALTY TO COVENANT ABDUL-BAHA."

53 September 14. On this date in 1961, the Custodians wrote that in Turkey "a court case was brought against the Bahá'ís by the public prosecutor, who claimed that the Faith was a "Tarighat"...forbidden by the law." In 1905, 'Abdu'l-Bahá claimed his tariqa had guided many Americans to Islam.

54 September 14. On this date in 1982, the NSA of Canada wrote the UHJ "concerning the role of Local Spiritual Assemblies in guiding parents and children in standards of behavior for children at community gatherings, such as Nineteen Day Feasts and Bahá'í Holy Day observances."

55 September 15. On this date in 1882, Khadíjih Bagum, one of the wives of the Báb, died in Shiraz. She died the same night as her slave Fiddih, who since the age of 7 had faithfully served her master, having been gifted to Khadíjih Bagum after being acquired by the Báb when she was no older than 7

56 September 15. On this date in 1951, Shoghi Effendi wrote "tremendous progress has been made in the United States during the last quarter of a century...only to the degree that they mirror forth in their joint lives the exalted standards of the Faith will they attract the masses to the Cause of God."

57 September 15. On this date in 2003, the Research Department of Universal House of Justice published a memorandum providing additional references concerning the following verse, which is paragraph 18 of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas: "It hath been ordained that every believer in God, the Lord of Judgement, shal

58 September 16. On this date in 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke at the home of Corinne True, who would later be appointed a Hand of the Cause of God by Shoghi Effendi. On February 25, 1902, Corinne True had written 'Abdu'l-Bahá a letter about the exclusion of women from the Chicago Bahá'í governing body..

59 September 16. On this date in 1979, Enoch Olinga was killed. A close associate of Idi Amin, Olinga, his wife, and three of his five children were murdered by unknown gunmen, during the administration of President Obote when people affiliated with the Amin regime were being systematically targeted

60 September 16. On this date in 1982, the UHJ wrote, "the manner in which meditation is done need not follow practices such as those advocated by proponents of yoga or other forms of Hindu mysticism."

61 September 16. On this date in 1992, the UHJ wrote that Shoghi Effendi's English translation "of a Text should form the 'basis' for translations into other European languages" but "translations into Oriental languages such as Turkish and Urdu could be made directly from the original texts."

62 September 17. On this date in 1912, an article in the Spokane Washington Daily Chronicle introduced 'Abdu'l-Bahá as "The Persian prophet, looked upon by 3,000,000 people in various parts of the world as the deliever of humanity."

63 September 17. On this date in 1954, Ruhaniyyih Ruth Moffett left Israel. She described the founding of that country six years previous as "a most remarkable bloodless revolution occurred, when 4,000,000 Moslems fled and 1,000,000 Jews marched in and began tilling their ancestral soil..."

64 September 17. On this date in 1961, the Bahá'í House of Worship in Ingleside, New South Wales, in the northern suburbs of Sydney, Australia was dedicated.

65 September 17. On this date in 1971, the UHJ wrote, "regarding the inscription on a head-stone...not to use any form of the Greatest Name but a nine-pointed star may be used...The position of the body in the grave should be with the feet pointing toward the Qiblih, which is Bahji in Akka."

66 September 17. On this date in 1973, the UHJ cabled "DELIGHTED ANNOUNCE APPOINTMENT HUSAYN AMANAT BRILLIANT YOUNG BAHÁ'I ARCHITECT CRADLE FAITH AS ARCHITECT OF BUILDING FOR UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE. THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE"

67 September 17. On this date in 1979, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum wrote a poem, "On Hearing of Enoch's Murder" which starts "The sunlight is black, The sunlight is black, What raven wing, Covered my sun at noonday? In my mouth is the salt of tears, I cannot swallow so much salt..."

68 September 17. On this date in 1986, the UHJ wrote "Bahá'ís of Europe would do well to increase their collaboration with the Esperanto Movement, and we encourage Bahá'ís who feel the urge to assist in this area, to learn Esperanto and take an active part in the activities of the Movement."

69 Baha'i History - September 18. On this date in 1954, Ethel Dawe, who served on the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia and New Zealand from 1948 to 1953, died.

70 September 18. On this date in 1926, a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi by Ruhi Afnan stated Shoghi Effendi "was very glad to learn of the encouraging prospects you have for your 'Herald of the South'" magazine, which was published from 1925 through 1960.

71 September 18. On this date in 1962, Dulcie Burns Dive died. She was a New Zealand Bahá'í with Maori heritage who became the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for the Cook Islands. She also served on the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia and New Zealand from 1944 to 1948 and 1951 to 1953.

72 September 18. On this date in 1985, the NSA of the US wrote LSAs regarding the restoration of administrative rights to Bahá'ís who left Iran via dissimulation, noting "until the lapse of one year, and then only contingent on the attitude and degree of repentance of the individuals concerned."

73 September 19. On this date in 1895, Sylvia Ioas was born. She would serve on the International Bahá'í Council, both as an appointed and elected member. She was the wife of Hand of the Cause of God Leroy Ioas, who accompanied Shoghi Effendi and Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum for their ...

74 September 19. On this date in 1919, 'Alí-Yulláh Nakhjavání was born in Baku, Azerbaijan. He would serve as a member of the Universal House of Justice from 1963 until his retirement in 2003.

75 September 19. On this date in 1946, Shoghi Effendi wrote "that the youth, in particular, must constantly and determinedly strive to exemplify a Bahá'í life. In the world around us we see moral decay, promiscuity, indecency, vulgarity, bad manners--the Bahá'í young people must be the opposite ..."

76 September 19. On this date in 1957, Shoghi Effendi wrote to Jean Sevin, named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for his pioneering to Tuamotu, that he approves his "returning to Tuamotu, to which he attaches great importance."

77 September 20. On this date in 1935, William Hatcher was born. A mathematician, philosopher, educator, he served on the NSAs of Canada, Switzerland, and Russia, and was Chair of Department of Ethics at the now-defunct Landegg International University.

78 September 20. On this date in 1948, Shoghi Effendi wrote "Any intelligent person must be wondering what you are wondering...If men refuse...God's Manifestation for this age and accepting Him, then they will bring upon themselves a fresh crisis in human affairs and very great affliction."

79 September 20. On this date in 1973, the UHJ wrote an NSA "when the Sacred Writings are published the standard English translation should be used, but there would be no objection to printing alongside it the translation into simple English which should be described as a paraphrase of the Holy Word.

80 September 20. On this date in 1975, the NSA of Panama asked the UHJ about books by William Miller and Hermann Zimmer. William Miller translated the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, which was published by the Royal Asiatic Society in 1961, three decades before the officially-sanctioned translation in 1992.

81 September 20. On this date in 1982, the UHJ wrote Kalimát Press about the publication of Ustad Salmani's "My Memories of Bahá'u'lláh" noting it "untimely and unwise" due to passages where believers refer to him as "You being God, Uncle" and other "unpleasant and unworthy" stories.

82 September 20. On this date in 1993, "a Group of concerned Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Straight Bahá'ís and their friends" addressed an open letter to the NSA of the U.S. addressing such topics as "Fear and ignorance of homosexuals within the Bahá'í Community" and "A Moral Double Standard".

83 September 20. On this date in 1994, an individual wrote the UHJ "concerning the degrees of authority possessed by Bahá'í historical sources, the process by which translations are authorized, the development of a "canon of Bahá'í doctrine," the status of documents prepared by the Research Department

84 September 21. On this date in 1957, a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States referred to Bahá'ís as "the leaven of God" and "the chosen people of God."

85 September 21. On this date in 1957, a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi wrote "that a course on Covenant-breaking should be included in the Summer School curriculum, so that the friends may understand the nature of this evil, and how it has affected our Faith for one hundred years ..."

86 September 21. On this date in 1957, Shoghi Effendi wrote his last letter to the Americas, titled "Heights Never Before Attained," later published in "Citadel of Faith" (pages 151-158).

87 September 21. On this date in 1957, Shoghi Effendi wrote "that the National Assembly should consider itself, aside from its other duties, as a Committee of Vigilance to watch over the Faith and protect it from its internal enemies, and from the constantly carried on and insidious activities...."

88 September 21. On this date in 1998, Susan Stiles Maneck wrote the Universal House of Justice, asking about the relationship between "materialistic methodologies" and "doctrinal heresy" in academic fields.

89 September 22, 1937. Shoghi wrote "The age-long sufferings and tribulations which the Jews all over the world have so cruelly experienced will be terminated during the Bahá'í era, as they will be gradually led to embrace the Faith which, indeed, constitutes the only means of salvation to their race.

90 September 22. On this date in 1898, The first Western pilgrims left America for Palestine. Led by Ibrahim George Kheiralla, the group included Phoebe Hearst, Lua Getsinger, May Maxwell, and Robert Turner. In 'Akká, they witnessed first hand the conflict between `Abdu'l-Bahá and his brothers.

91 September 22. On this date in 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave a talk in Lincoln, Nebraska about "the corruption and iniquity of the Covenant-breaker" where he referred to his nephew as "Shu'á of darkness"

92 September 22. On this date in 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited the home of William Jennings Bryan in Lincoln, Nebraska. He was not home at the time, however, as he was busy campaigning for Woodrow Wilson in whose administration he would serve as Secretary of State.

93 September 22. On this date in 2007, 'Alí-Muhammad Varqá, the longest surviving Hand of the Cause of God, died in Haifa. From 1955 until his death he was also the Trustee of Ḥuqúqu'lláh, a position he inherited after the death of his father Valíyu'lláh, who had served as Trustee from 1938 to 1955.

94 September 23. On this date in 1918, during World War I, General Allenby's British forces captured Haifa from the Ottomans, an event which Shoghi Effendi in 1936 would refer to as "the liberation of Palestine." Two years after General Allenby's conquest, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was knighted.

95 September 23. On this date in 1968, the UHJ wrote "We have not come across anything specific in the writings on transplants of hearts and other organs or regarding the time of death, and the Universal House of Justice does not wish to make any statements on these points at this time."

96 September 23. On this date in 2015, an individual emailed the Universal House of Justice expressing "concern that lack of translations of Arabic Bahá'í Writings into Persian may be preventing Iranians who are not proficient in Arabic from understanding the Arabic Writings, such as the Kitáb-i-Aqdas

97 Baha'i History - September 24. On this date in 1924, Shoghi Effendi wrote American Bahá'ís "We have but to turn our eyes to the world without to realize the fierceness and the magnitude of the forces of darkness that are struggling with the dawning light of the Abhá Revelation."

98 Baha'i History - September 24. On this date in 1938, Shoghi Effendi wrote "Loyalty to world order of Bahá'u'lláh...champion builders of the American continent...that sustains system of God's essentially supra-national, supernatural order so laboriously evolved, so recently established."

99 Baha'i History - September 24. On this date in 1978, the UHJ wrote "Because of the overwhelming significance of the Bahá'í message and the Bahá'í Revelation, any such film produced under the aegis of the Bahá'í community would have to be of the very highest quality in all respects."

100 Baha'i History - September 24. On this date in 1992, the NSA of the U.S. wrote a letter addressing issues raised in Christian philosopher and scholar Francis J. Beckwith's book "Baha'i," specifically the modification of dates in recent editions of J.E. Esselmont's "Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era".

101 Baha'i History - September 24. On this date in 2000, the UHJ wrote all NSAs about the Millennium Forum, noting the BIC "took part so notably in these occurrences that have set down milestones along the way towards that new World Order so clearly foreshadowed by the Pen of Bahá'u'lláh."

102 September 24. On this date in 1941, a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the Boltons stated that "he was delighted to hear that you are both going to teach the Cause in Hobart, Tasmania." In 1954, Stanley Bolton would be named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for ...

103 September 24. On this date in 1951, a cablegram sent by Shoghi Effendi announced that after "prolonged, delicate negotiations involving Ministries of Finance and Religious Affairs and Haifa Municipality have culminated in agreement in principle to purchase approximately twenty-two thousand meter..

104 Baha'i History - September 25. On this date 1989, the Universal House of Justice wrote about the function and importance of "Bahá'í review."

105 Baha'i History - September 25. On this date in 1933, Shoghi Effendi wrote, "Without the assistance of God, as given through the message of Bahá'u'lláh, peace can never be safely and adequately established. To disregard the Bahá'í solution for world peace is to build on foundations of sand."

106 Baha'i History - September 25. On this date in 2011, the NSA of the US was "pleased to announce the launching of a new nationwide initiative aimed at furthering the defense of Iran's Bahá'ís, with a particular focus on the embattled Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education."

107 September 25. On this date in 1934, Shoghi Effendi wrote German Bahá'ís that he had "the brightest hopes for the future expansion of the Faith not only in your two localities but throughout Germany as a whole."

108 September 25. On this date in 1936, Shoghi Effendi wrote an introduction to the National Spiritual Assembly of India for Siegfried Schopflocher. Raised an Orthodox Jew in Germany, he later emigrated to Canada and was the primary financier of many projects, including the Temple in Wilmette.

109 September 25. On this date in 1942, Shoghi Effendi wrote "There is an answer in the teachings for everything; unfortunately the majority of the Bahá'ís, however intensely devoted and sincere they may be, lack for the most part the necessary scholarship and wisdom to reply to and refute the ..."

110 September 25. On this date in 1973, the UHJ wrote "A name should be removed only when the person clearly states that he no longer believes in Bahá'u'lláh and wishes his name to be removed from Bahá'í membership. If the believer's whereabouts are unknown, his name should still not be removed..."

111 September 25. On this date in 1999, David Kelly converted to the Bahá'í Faith at the Bosch Bahá'í School in California. David Kelly was a prime source for the false information of Iraq's purported possession of weapons of mass destruction in the lead-up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

112 September 25. On this date in 2009, Kathryn Alio died. An early American Bahá'í who pioneered to Alaska, Lesotho and Iceland, she served on the National Spiritual Assembly of Alaska.

113 September 25. On this date in 2020, Farzam Arbab, former member of the UHJ from 1993 to 2013, died in San Diego, California. Farzam Arbab was the brother-in-law of Gustavo Correa, who was a UHJ member from 2008 to 2018. Several of the Arbabs and Correas lead various Bahá'í-affiliated NGOs.

114 Baha'i History - September 26. On this date in 1877, Siegfried Schopflocher, a Hand of the Cause of God, was born. The youngest of 18 children, he was raised an Orthodox Jew in Germany. He later emigrated to Canada and was the primary financier of many projects, including the Temple in Wilmette.

115 Baha'i History - September 26. On this date in 1957, Shoghi Effendi wrote "we cannot accept as believers those who are openly" engaged in "companionate marriage."

116 Baha'i History - September 26. On this date in 1957, Shoghi Effendi wrote, "Your Assembly should not remove the names of Bahá'ís from the voting list just because they do not attend meetings or just because their addresses are unknown. It is hard to make Bahá'ís..."

117 Baha'i History - September 26. On this date in 1962, the Custodians wrote all Hands of the Cause of God about updated demographics and listed further individuals expelled for supporting Mason Remey's claim of being the Second Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith.

118 Baha'i History - September 26. On this date in 1969, the UHJ wrote, "The reports we have received on summer school sessions held in Europe this year indicate that some of them spend undue time on philosophic and esoteric subjects and insufficient emphasis on the Bahá'í Faith and its Teachings."

119 September 26. On this date in 1908, David Hofman, who served on the Universal House of Justice from 1963 until 1988 and before that on the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles for 27 years, was born.

120 September 26. On this date in 1955, Shoghi Effendi wrote "Certainly if it is suppressed in one place, the power of the Cause is such that it must rise with greater strength in another place; and thus the persecutions of the Persian Bahá'ís have caused the Faith to surge ahead in Africa."

121 September 26. On this date in 1976, the UHJ wrote conference participants in Nairobi noting "that in addition to Quddús the only other companion of the Báb on His pilgrimage to Mecca was an Ethiopian, and that he and his wife were intimately associated with Him and His household in Shiraz."

122 September 26. On this date in 1978, the UHJ wrote that "a believer who continues to take alcoholic drinks...is subject to loss of his voting rights."

123 September 26. On this date in 1990, an individual wrote the Universal House of Justice with "questions regarding the unity of religions in this century, the Jews and the crucifixion of Christ, and the sacrifice of Ishmael."

124 September 27. On this date in 1912, during his tour of North America, Mahmud's Diary relates that 'Abdu'l-Bahá availed himself of the resort amenities in Glenwood Springs, Colorado where he "strolled in the spacious garden and boulevard adjacent to the hotel until He reached the river where there

125 September 27. On this date in 1926, the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin published an open letter from Queen Marie of Romania about the Bahá'í Faith. While Bahá'í sources claim Queen Marie was the first monarch to convert to the faith, her daughter Ileana denied any such conversion had taken place.

126 September 27. On this date in 1947, Shoghi Effendi quoted Abdu'l-Bahá as saying "Every day at first light, ye gather the Bahá'í children together and teach them the communes and prayers..they should, at every morn, turn their faces toward the Kingdom and make mention of the Lord and praise His Name

127 September 27. On this date in 1947, Shoghi Effendi wrote that he "does not feel that the friends should make a practice of saying grace or of teaching it to children."

128 September 27. On this date in 1957, Saeid Rezaie was born. He is one of the Yaran, the ad hoc administrative structure established in Iran after that country banned the Bahá'í Administrative Order.

129 Baha'i History - September 28. On this date in 1990, "The Universal House of Justice draws to your attention that portion of the most recent Ridvan message in which the friends throughout the world are asked to focus on the need to attract people of capacity and prominence to the Faith."

130 September 28. On this date in 1926, the Toronto Daily Star published an open letter from Queen Marie of Romania about the Bahá'í Faith. While Bahá'í sources claim Queen Marie was the first monarch to convert to the faith, her daughter Ileana denied any such conversion had taken place.

131 September 28. On this date in 1928, Shoghi Effendi wrote "Only through such supervision and control of all Bahá'í press activities can the friends hope to avoid confusion and misunderstanding in their own minds and in the mind of the general public whom they can reach through the press."

132 September 28. On this date in 1939, Martha Root died. Shoghi Effendi had called her "the foremost travel teacher in the first Bahá'í Century." She met with Marie of Romania, who Bahá'ís claim was the first monarch to convert to the faith, although her daughter Ileana denied any such conversion.

133 September 28. On this date in 1941, Shoghi Effendi wrote an individual, regarding Spiritual Assemblies, that "These bodies have the sacred obligation to help, advise, protect and guide the believers...You should go to them as a child would to its parents...."

134 September 28. On this date in 1941, Shoghi Effendi wrote "Chastity implies both before and after marriage an unsullied, chaste sex life. Before marriage absolutely chaste, after marriage absolutely faithful to one's chosen companion. Faithful in all sexual acts, faithful in word and in deed."

135 September 28. On this date in 2020, Douglas Martin, who served on the Universal House of Justice from 1993 until his retirement in 2005, died in Toronto, Canada. In 2000, Juan Cole wrote "A Brief History of Douglas Martin, Member, Universal House of Justice".

136 Baha'i History - September 29. On this date in 1977, the UHJ wrote "the Guardian quotes many passages from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh lauding the principle of kingship and envisaging an increase of monarchies in the future."

137 Baha'i History - September 29. On this date in 1986, an NSA wrote the International Teaching Centre seeking guidance on an article titled "The Infallibility of the Prophets" which "concludes, by means of logical analysis...that Bahá'u'lláh, and indeed all the Prophets of God, are not infallible."

138 Baha'i History - September 29. On this date in 1990, Harold Collis Featherstone, a Hand of the Cause of God, died in Kathmandu, Nepal, where he was visiting Bahá'ís.

139 September 29, 2004, an article by the Bahá'í New Service begins "Participants at a Baha'i summer school here visited the summer residence of Queen Marie of Romania (1875-1938), the first monarch to embrace the Baha'i Faith." Her daughter Ileana denied any such conversion had taken place.

140 September 29. On this date in 1942, Shoghi Effendi wrote "Concerning your question whether the heirs to whom the principal residence, furniture and clothing of the deceased are transferred by way of inheritance will be exempt from the payment of Huqúq or not"

141 September 29. On this date in 1977, the UHJ wrote that "the Tablets of the Divine Plan, which were revealed by Abdu'l-Bahá during the First World War, are the Charter for the teaching of the Faith. All the teaching plans launched by the beloved Guardian, as well as those subsequently directed ..."

142 September 29. On this date in 1997, an individual asked the the UHJ "regarding the Covenant-breaking material sent to your personal email account," receiving the answer "it is closely following this issue...With regard to your concerns over the content of the message, you are advised to turn to ..."

143 Baha'i History - September 30. On this date in 1912, Thornton Chase, the first American convert to the Bahá'í Faith to remain in the religion, died. Thornton Chase was also named a Disciple of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Hand of the Cause of God.

144 Baha'i History - September 30. On this date in 1949, Shoghi Effendi wrote "that it is necessary to follow in full the transliteration used in God Passes By, even for the names of famous cities, etc., which have in European languages an accepted way of being spelt."

145 Baha'i History - September 30. On this date in 1949, Shoghi Effendi wrote, "the theocratic systems, such as the Catholic Church and the Caliphate...man-made...The Bahá'í theocracy, on the contrary, is both divinely ordained as a system and, of course, based on the teachings of the Prophet Himself."

146 September 30. On this date in 1912, The Evening Standard of Salt Lake City introduced "'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbas, leader of the Bahá'í movement, which he says has 10,000,000 followers in the world."

147 September 30. On this date in 1928, Dorothy Wright Nelson, who became a Senior Circuit Judge of the Ninth Circuit, Dean of the School of Law at the University of Southern California, and a member of the NSA of the U.S. from 1969 to 2009, was born in San Pedro, California.

148 September 30. On this date in 1949, Shoghi Effendi wrote an individual whose visit to a Bahá'í Temple had elicited an "emotional reaction produced by disappointment and the fact you were still exalted by your happy days at the Moral Re-Armament camp."

149 September 30. On this date in 1950, Shoghi Effendi wrote that "it is not necessary to repeat the Bab's prayer so many times."

150 September 30. On this date in 1968, an LSA of Chicago wrote the UHJ that "there should be one day in the year in which all of the religions should agree," to which the UHJ replied "However, this is not the underlying concept of World Religion Day, which is a celebration of the need..."

September 1. On this date in 1912, "The Oregonian" carried an article about 'Abdu'l-Bahá, introducing him as the "Leader of Religions Movement Which Claims Three Million Followers" and quoting his statement "When in London he was approached by a student of higher criticism who asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá..

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

September 1. On this date in 1912, "The Oregonian" of Portland, Oregon carried [an article](#) about 'Abdu'l-Bahá, introducing him as the "Leader of Religions Movement Which Claims Three Million Followers" and quoting his statement "When in London he was approached by a student of higher criticism who asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá if he should continue in the church. 'Abdu'l-Bahá replied: "Yes, you must not dissociate yourself from it. Know this: the Kingdom of God is not in any society. If you belong to a society already do not forsake your brothers. You can be a Bahá'í-Christian, a Bahá'í-Freemason, a Bahá'í-Jew, Bahá'í-Muhammadan.""

During his visit to London in 1911, 'Abdu'l-Bahá had the following [interaction with a Christian...](#)

A student of the modern methods of the higher criticism asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá if he would do well to continue in the church with which he had been associated all his life, and whose language was full of meaning to him. 'Abdu'l-Bahá answered: **"You must not dissociate yourself from it.** Know this; the Kingdom of God is not in any Society; some seekers go through many Societies as a traveller goes through many cities till he reach his destination. If you belong to a Society already do not forsake your brothers. **You can be a Bahá'í-Christian, a Bahá'í-Freemason, a Bahá'í-Jew, a Bahá'í-Muhammadán.** The number nine

contains eight, and seven, and all the other numbers, and does not deny any of them. Do not distress or deny anyone by saying 'He is not a Bahá'í!'

During his tour of North America in 1912, coverage in news stories would report this comment.

For example, on February 18, 1912, an [article in "The Pittsburgh Pennsylvania Press"](#) featured an article stating "In some respects the Bahá'í movement is the most remarkable of modern times. It isn't a religion, in the sense that Christianity and Mohammedism and other faiths are religions. Its followers belong to many diverse sects, remaining Christian or Mohammedan or Brahmin as the case may be, and still being thorough going Bahis." During his visit to London in 1911, 'Abdu'l-Bahá had [stated](#) that "You can be a Bahá'í-Christian, a Bahá'í-Freemason, a Bahá'í-Jew, a Bahá'í-Muḥammadán."

And on February 28, 1912, the ["SFO Daily News" of San Francisco featured an article](#) stating "In some respects the Bahá'í movement is the most remarkable of modern times. It isn't a religion in the sense that Christianity and Mohammedism and other faiths are religious. Its followers belong to many diverse sects, remaining Christian or Mohammedan or Brahmin as the case may be, and still being thorough going Bahá'ís" During his visit to London in 1911, 'Abdu'l-Bahá had [stated](#) that "You can be a Bahá'í-Christian, a Bahá'í-Freemason, a Bahá'í-Jew, a Bahá'í-Muḥammadán."

Similarly, on September 1, 1912, "The Oregonian" of Portland, Oregon carried [an article](#) about 'Abdu'l-Bahá, introducing him as the "Leader of Religions Movement Which Claims Three Million Followers" and quoting his statement "When in London he was approached by a student of higher criticism who asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá if he should continue in the church. 'Abdu'l-Bahá replied: "Yes, you must not dissociate yourself from it. Know this: the Kingdom of God is not in any society. If you belong to a society already do not forsake your brothers. You can be a Bahá'í-Christian, a Bahá'í-Freemason, a Bahá'í-Jew, Bahá'í-Mohammedan."

In fact, 'Abdu'l-Bahá had encouraged the Bahá'ís of Manchester to emulate the freemasons...

October 1921

In the Name of God! O Sincere Servant of the Blessed Beauty!

Your detailed letter has been received, and has been the cause of the utmost joy and gladness. Praise be to God! The loved ones are all astir and active, but prudence is

necessary. You have rent the veil too widely asunder. Explain to the loved ones that the rending of the veil to such an extent will be the cause of great agitation, and the harm thereof will reach to the Holy Land. Great caution is necessary. Discourses in churches and great public gatherings are in no wise permitted as in this place enemies, within and without, are lying in wait and are bent on aggression. Prudence requires that activity should, for the present, be concealed and carried on with the utmost moderation. Convey to the loved ones, one and all, on my behalf, the greatest longing, love and kindness. Give a spiritual message from me to Mr. Healds and say unto him: "Peruse the Gospel, how His Holiness Christ – may my life be a sacrifice to Him – says, 'Conceal it, that the Pharisees may not be informed thereof.' Now the same condition prevails."

This matter is of the greatest importance. On no account let them contribute articles to the newspapers, and so long as they are not sure of any soul, let them breath no word to him. Consider how the Freemasons have for two hundred years carried on their work, and unto this day they have not openly declared it to any soul. Not until they find a hearing ear will they speak. The loved ones too must proceed with the greatest prudence, lest serious difficulties be created. If any one should travel to the Holy Land, he must on no account declare to anyone by the way that his purpose is to visit us. The loved ones must, in the presence of strangers, speak forth simply the teachings of the Blessed Beauty and mention no word of the belief concerning Him. Should anyone inquire, "What is your belief regarding the Blessed Beauty?" let them answer: "We regard Him as the foremost teacher and educator of these later ages and Abdu'l-Baha as the Centre of His Covenant."

The original scanned document can be found at http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/docs/vol13/Barstow_600-623.pdf , where it is labeled BC#608. It was published through H-Net's [Documents on the Shaykhi, Babi and Baha'i Movements](#).

Numerous statements by Shoghi Effendi and the Universal House of Justice would later contradict these statements, with Bahá'ís being explicitly prohibited from associating with any other faiths.

On July 24, 1953, [a letter](#) written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the Spiritual Assembly of Japan stated that "So far as non-Bahá'ís affiliating with the Bahá'í Faith is concerned, either a person becomes a Bahá'í and accepts Bahá'u'lláh as the divine Manifestation for this day, or he does not...they can only become Bahá'ís on the basis of accepting Bahá'u'lláh as a divine Manifestation, and of course, with this goes the acceptance of the Bab as the Forerunner, and Abdu'l-Bahá as the Center of the Covenant, and the present [Administrat-](#)

ive Order. When a person has reached the sea of immortality, it is idle to keep seeking elsewhere."

1384. Affiliation with Faith Alone is Insufficient

"So far as non-Bahá'ís affiliating with the Bahá'í Faith is concerned, either a person becomes a Bahá'í and accepts Bahá'u'lláh as the divine Manifestation for this day, or he does not. The tenets of the Bahá'í Faith are simple as outlined by the Guardian, but they do not permit of any variations. In other words, if any members of the ... Movement wish to become Bahá'ís, they will be most welcome; but they can only become Bahá'ís on the basis of accepting Bahá'u'lláh as a divine Manifestation, and of course, with this goes the acceptance of the Bab as the Forerunner, and Abdu'l-Bahá as the Center of the Covenant, and the present Administrative Order.

"When a person has reached the sea of immortality, it is idle to keep seeking elsewhere...."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the Spiritual Assembly of Japan, July 24, 1953: Japan Will Turn Ablaze, pp. 76-77)

For example, on August 5, 1955, Shoghi Effendi [addressed a letter](#) to an individual believer...

1387. Bahá'ís Belonging to Churches, Synagogues, Freemasonry and the Like

"As regards the question of Bahá'ís belonging to churches, synagogues, Freemasonry, etc., the friends must realize that now that the Faith is over 100 years old, and its own institutions arising, so to speak, rapidly above-ground, the distinctions are becoming ever sharper, and **the necessity for them to support whole-heartedly their own institutions and cut themselves off entirely from those of the past, is now clearer than ever before.** The eyes of the people of the world are beginning to be focused on us; and, as humanity's plight goes from bad to worse, we will be watched ever more intently by non-Bahá'ís, to see whether we do uphold our own institutions whole-heartedly; whether we are the people of the new creation or not; whether we live up to our beliefs, principles and laws in deed as well as word. We cannot be too careful. We cannot be too exemplary.

"There is another aspect to this question which the friends should seriously ponder, and that is that, whereas organizations such as Freemasonry may have been in the past entirely free from any political taint, in the state of flux the world is in at present, and the extraordinary way in which things become corrupted and tainted by political thought and

influences, there is no guarantee that such an association might not gradually or suddenly become a political instrument. The less Bahá'ís have to do, therefore, with such things, the better."

On November 21, 1968, [a letter](#) of the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of Switzerland stated that "If a person is registered as a member of a church or similar religious organization he should withdraw from it on becoming a Bahá'í...one cannot be a Bahá'í and also a member of another religious organization...For a Bahá'í to be a member of a community which holds such beliefs is disloyalty to Christ and hypocrisy towards the Christians."

532. On Becoming a Bahá'í Should Withdraw from Church

"If a person is registered as a member of a church or similar religious organization he should withdraw from it on becoming a Bahá'í.

"In the case of new believers, it should be made clear to them in the course of teaching them the Faith that one cannot be a Bahá'í and also a member of another religious organization. This is simply a matter of straight-forwardness and honesty. A great part of the teaching of Jesus Christ concerned His Second Coming and the preparation of His followers to be ready for it. The Bahá'ís believe He has come. No Christian Church believes this; on the contrary, they either look for Him still, or have ceased to believe that He will come. For a Bahá'í to be a member of a community which holds such beliefs is disloyalty to Christ and hypocrisy towards the Christians.

"You should not formalize the method by which the withdrawal from the church is to be made, and certainly nothing should be added to a declaration form, if you use one. It should be left to the Local Spiritual Assembly which is accepting the declaration to satisfy itself, as it deems best in each case, that the new believer has already resigned from the church, or does so within a reasonable time of his declaration.

"In regard to the old believers, your Assembly should tactfully, and in a kindly way, make the Bahá'í position clear to them and gently persuade them to resign from their former churches. This is a matter for great tact and discretion. If such a believer remains adamant you will have to consider depriving him of his voting rights."

(From a letter of the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of Switzerland, November 21, 1968: Canadian Bahá'í News, Special Section, March 1973, p. 6)

On March 26, 1956, [a letter written](#) on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer told him how to go about resigning from his Masonic Order with an explanation not to "prejudice the Masons or their friends, or arouse in them a feeling of anger against the Faith, or indeed need involve the Faith at all."

[1390. Resignation from the Masonic Order](#)

"As regards your question about the Masonic Order, he considers that the honest and courageous thing for you to do is to inform your Lodge that you no longer consider yourself, for purely personal reasons, a Mason; and would like to have your name taken off their list. If they should press you for an explanation, which he imagines is unlikely, everybody being free to do as they please in this world, you can explain to them that in the present chaotic period the world is passing through, with so many streams and counterstreams of political thoughts and prejudices of all kinds, racial, religious, etc., storming the minds of men, that you wish to disentangle yourself from all association with the past and to stand alone, free in your own ideas.

"He does not think that such an explanation will prejudice the Masons or their friends, or arouse in them a feeling of anger against the Faith, or indeed need involve the Faith at all."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, March 26, 1956)

On February 17, 1956, [a letter](#) written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer stated that "all the Bahá'ís everywhere have been urged to give up their old affiliations and withdraw from membership in the Masonic and other secret Societies."

[1388. Bahá'ís Requested to Withdraw from Masonic and Other Secret Societies](#)

"As regards your question about Masonry, the Bahá'ís, the Guardian feels very strongly, must learn at the present time to think internationally and not locally. Although each believer realizes that he is a member of one great spiritual family, a member of the [New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh](#), he does not often carry this thought through to its logical conclusion: which is that if the Bahá'ís all over the world each belong to some different kind of society or church or political party, the unity of the Faith will be destroyed, because inevitably they will become involved in doctrines and policies that are in some way against our Teachings, and often against another group of people in another part of the world, or another race, or another religious block.

"Therefore, all the Bahá'ís everywhere have been urged to give up their old affiliations and withdraw from membership in the Masonic and other secret Societies in order to be en-

tirely free to serve the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh as a united body. Such groups as Masonry, however high the local standard may be, are in other countries gradually being influenced by the issues sundering the nations at present.

"The Guardian wants the Bahá'ís to disentangle themselves from anything that may in any way, now or in the future, compromise their independent status as Bahá'ís and the supra-national nature of their Faith."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, February 17, 1956)

Almost exactly a year earlier, on February 12, 1956, Shoghi Effendi [addressed a letter](#) to an individual believer addressing "Why Bahá'ís Are Requested to Withdraw from Membership in the Church, Synagogue, etc." explaining "that we are the building blocks of Bahá'u'lláh's [New World Order](#) ... the Bahá'ís should be absolutely independent, and stand identified only with their own teachings. That is why they are requested to withdraw from membership in the church, the synagogue, or whatever other previous religious organization they may have been affiliated with, to have nothing whatsoever to do with secret societies, or with political movements, etc. It protects the Cause, it reinforces the Cause, and it asserts before all the world its independent character."

[1389. Why Bahá'ís Are Requested to Withdraw from Membership in the Church, Synagogue, etc.](#)

"The point is not that there is something intrinsically wrong with Masonry, which no doubt has many very high ideals and principles, and has had a very good influence in the past.

"The reasons why the Guardian feels that it is imperative for the Bahá'ís to be dissociated from masonry at this time, and I might add, other secret associations, is that we are the building blocks of Bahá'u'lláh's [New World Order](#) ... the Bahá'ís should be absolutely independent, and stand identified only with their own teachings. That is why they are requested to withdraw from membership in the church, the synagogue, or whatever other previous religious organization they may have been affiliated with, to have nothing whatsoever to do with secret societies, or with political movements, etc. It protects the Cause, it reinforces the Cause, and it asserts before all the world its independent character.

"Another reason is that unfortunately the tremendous political influences in the world today are seeping deeper and deeper into men's minds; and movements which in the past

were absolutely uninfluenced by any political tinge of thought now in many places are becoming infiltrated with political side-taking and political issues; and it becomes all the more important for the Bahá'ís to withdraw from them in order to protect the Faith.

"The Guardian believes that you, as an intelligent man, a Bahá'í, will see the need for this. It is only by all living according to general principles that we can knit the fabric of the Faith all over the world into a closer unity.

"He is fully aware that certain individuals are struck much more forcibly by such requests than others. This has been the case with some of the old Bahá'ís in England, who have been Masons from their boyhood on; but, as it is his duty to protect the Faith, he can only appeal to the Bahá'ís to assist him in doing so; and to consider the general good, rather than their personal feelings, however deep they may be, in such matters."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, February 12, 1956)



Comments

September 1. On this date in 1921, the first Bahá'í public meeting was held in Seoul, with Agnes Alexander speaking. According to "Raising the Banner in Korea", "She was very surprised at the size of the audience, about 900 men and women sitting cross-legged on the matted floor listening intently.

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

September 1. On this date in 1921, the first Bahá'í public meeting was held in Seoul, with [Agnes Alexander](#) speaking. According to "[Raising the Banner in Korea](#)", "She was very surprised at the size of the audience, about 900 men and women sitting cross-legged on the matted floor listening intently."

On July 21, 1875, [Agnes Baldwin Alexander](#), born in Honolulu on July 21, 1875, to descendants of Christian missionary families, the Baldwins and the Alexanders, who were among the families of whom James A. Michener said, "They came to the islands to do good, and they did right well."

She became a Bahá'í in 1900 while visiting Italy.

After returning in 1901, she remained in Hawaii for 12 years, and of her experiences there wrote *Personal Recollections of a Bahai Life in the Hawaiian Islands*. Upon 'Abdu'l-Baha's request, [Agnes Baldwin Alexander](#) moved to Japan in 1914. In 1921 she became the first to introduce the religion to Korea. Except for extended vacations in Hawaii, Alexander spent over thirty years in Japan.

Also at the request of 'Abdu'l-Baha, Alexander became an early advocate of Esperanto and used that new international language to spread the Bahá'í teachings at meetings and

conferences. At Shoghi Effendi's request, Alexander wrote two histories: *Forty Years of the Bahá'í Cause in Hawaii: 1902-1942* and *History of the Bahá'í Faith in Japan: 1914-1938*. Both of these volumes were published posthumously. In 1957, Shoghi Effendi appointed her a Hand of the Cause of God.

In 1964, Alexander represented the Universal House of Justice, at the election of Hawaii's first National Spiritual Assembly, which is distinct from the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States.

After suffering a broken hip in 1965, and spending two years in a Tokyo hospital, Alexander returned home to Honolulu in 1967. On January 1, 1971, Alexander died. She was buried behind Kawaiahao Church with her missionary forebears.



Comments

September 1. On this date in 1935, Shoghi Effendi wrote "Bahá'u'lláh's message is thus the only key to a true understanding of the mysteries that envelop man's spiritual life."

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

September 1. On this date in 1935, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#) "Bahá'u'lláh's message is thus the only key to a true understanding of the mysteries that envelop man's spiritual life."

With regard to your question concerning the meaning of the name "[Hidden Words](#)": It is, indeed, one of the most suggestive titles of the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. These words are called "hidden" due to the fact that men have had neither the knowledge nor a true sense of appreciation of them before they were revealed by **Bahá'u'lláh. It is through Him, Who is the sole Mouthpiece of God in this age, that spiritual realities and truths have been once more reinterpreted and revealed afresh to mankind. Bahá'u'lláh's message is thus the only key to a true understanding of the mysteries that envelop man's spiritual life.**

(From a letter dated 1 September 1935 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

The [Hidden Words](#) was written around 1857, after Bahá'u'lláh's two year study with Sufi sheikhs. Bahá'u'lláh had [left Baghdad for the mountains of Kurdistan](#) on April 10, 1854, and returned to Baghdad on March 19, 1856. He spent those two years using the name *Darvish Muhammad-i-Irani* studying with various [Sufi](#) sheikhs. His studies with the [Sufis](#) led to his writing the [Four Valleys](#) in 1857 and [Seven Valleys](#) in 1860. Both books are usually published together and their contents are largely based on the experiences he had as *Darvish Muhammad-i-Irani*. Similarly, the [Kitáb-i-Íqán](#), written in 1861, contains many themes common to [Sufi teaching](#). Finally, [Bahá'í cosmology](#) is largely a reflection of [Sufi cosmology](#).



Comments

September 1. On this date in 1975, the UHJ wrote "Ablutions are necessary for all three Obligatory Prayers. Reciting the words specified in the medium Obligatory Prayer pertains only to that prayer, i.e., for the short and long Obligatory Prayers it would be sufficient to wash one's hands and ..."

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

September 1. On this date in 1975, the UHJ [wrote](#) "Ablutions are necessary for all three Obligatory Prayers. Reciting the words specified in the medium Obligatory Prayer pertains only to that prayer, i.e., for the short and long Obligatory Prayers it would be sufficient to wash one's hands and face in preparation for each of these two prayers."

[1537. Ablutions and Movements to Accompany the Recitation of the Long Obligatory Prayer](#)

"Concerning the movements to accompany the recitations of the Long Obligatory Prayer, in response to an enquiry from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Near East, the House of Justice stated in a letter dated September 1, 1975:

'Ablutions are necessary for all three Obligatory Prayers.' 'Reciting the words specified in the medium Obligatory Prayer pertains only to that prayer, i.e., for the short and long Obligatory Prayers it would be sufficient to wash one's hands and face in preparation for each of these two prayers.'

"However, the Universal House of Justice has stated to National Spiritual Assemblies in the West that no issue should be made of this matter at the present time and since it has not been clarified and applied in detail to the western believers, they are under no obligation

to go beyond the instructions given by the beloved Guardian in 'Prayers and Meditations' in which ablutions are prescribed only in connection with the medium Obligatory Prayer.

"The instruction to raise one's hands occurs once in the medium Obligatory Prayer and five times in the long Obligatory Prayer. The term used in the original Arabic for the first, second and fourth occasions in the long Prayer is the same as that used in the medium Prayer. Therefore it would be entirely correct for the worshipper, when raising his hands on these occasions during the recitation of the long Obligatory Prayer, to follow the more specific instructions given in English by the Guardian in his translation of the medium one. On the third and fifth occasions the instruction is given in the long Prayer, the words 'in supplication' are omitted. The House of Justice does not wish at this time to give any specific guidance in this connection; it leaves the matter to the discretion of the friends."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer, April 1, 1982: Ibid.)



Comments

September 1. On this date in 1975, the UHJ wrote to someone who was "particularly disturbed by the punishments prescribed for certain offences, presumably those for theft, murder and arson. As is explained in Note 42 on page 64 of the 'Synopsis and Codification of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas' ..."

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

September 1. On this date in 1975, the UHJ [wrote](#) to someone who was "particularly disturbed by the punishments prescribed for certain offences, presumably those for theft, murder and arson. As is explained in Note 42 on page 64 of the '[Synopsis and Codification of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas](#)', these punishments are intended for a future condition of society and will have to be supplemented and applied by the Universal House of Justice ..."

In 1973 a "[Synopsis and Codification](#)" of the [Kitáb-i-Aqdas](#), the central book of the Bahá'í Faith written by Bahá'u'lláh, was published in English by the Universal House of Justice, with 21 passages of the [Aqdas](#) that had already been translated into English by Shoghi Effendi with additional terse lists of laws and ordinances contained in the book outside of any contextual prose.

The [Aqdas](#) was only officially translated into English in 1992, by which time [other translations](#), such as one by the [Royal Asiatic Society](#), were becoming increasingly available through dissemination via the internet. My personal opinion is that the material in the [Kitáb-i-Aqdas](#) is so objectionable that the [Bahá'í authorities](#) wished to shield Western believers from its contents, as they do from Bahá'u'lláh's other works by not providing translations.

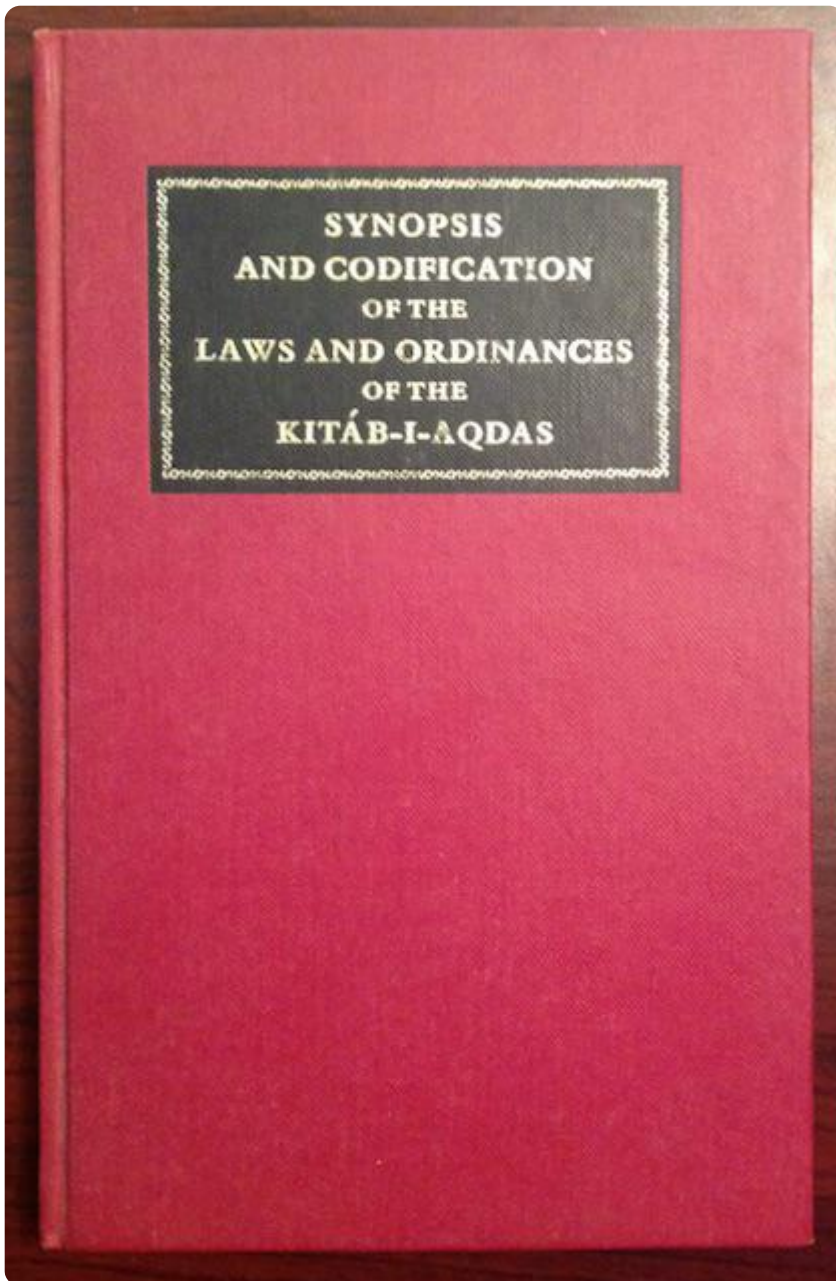
One of the purposes of divine Revelation is to educate human beings in the right way of living, so that they will know how they should behave and will refrain from criminal acts because the very thought of performing them would be horrifying. However, we are at the present time far from the attainment of this goal, and Baha'u'lláh has provided in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas those basic laws which He knows mankind will need during this Dispensation in order to establish the unity of mankind and upraise the standard of justice in the world. If you read Chapter 77 of "Some Answered Questions" you will see that 'Abdu'l-Bahá has developed this theme more fully.

Bahá'u'lláh warns mankind in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas itself not to forget that these are the laws of Him Who is the Most Merciful of the Merciful. It is God Who knows what mankind needs and we should never imagine that we can be more merciful than He.

You say that you were particularly disturbed by the punishments prescribed for certain offences, presumably those for theft, murder and arson. As is explained in Note 42 on page 64 of the ["Synopsis and Codification of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas"](#), these punishments are intended for a future condition of society and will have to be supplemented and applied by the Universal House of Justice. The punishment for theft, for example, says that for the third offence a mark must be placed on the thief's forehead (nothing is said about branding), so that people will be warned of his proclivities. All details of how the mark is to be applied, how long it must be worn, on what conditions it may be removed, as well as the seriousness of various degrees of theft have been left by Bahá'u'lláh for the Universal House of Justice to decide when the law has to be applied. Similarly, only the fundamental principles of the punishments for murder and arson are given in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. Wilful murder is to be punished either by capital punishment or life imprisonment.

Such matters as degrees of offence and whether any extenuating circumstances are to be taken into account, and which of the two prescribed punishments is to be the norm are left to the Universal House of Justice to decide in the light of prevailing conditions when the law is in operation. Arson, as you yourself can see from the newspapers, is becoming an increasingly frequent offence — scarcely a day passes without some building being burned or blown up, often causing agonizing death to innocent people. Bahá'u'lláh prescribes that a person who burns a house intentionally is to be burned or imprisoned for life, but again, the application of these punishments and the fixing of degrees of offence are left to the Universal House of Justice. Obviously there is a tremendous difference in the degree of the offence of a person who burns down an empty warehouse from that of one who sets fire to a school full of children.

(From a letter dated 1 September 1975 written by the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)



Comments

September 1. On this date in 1977, the UHJ addressed a letter "Concerning Hindu prophecies of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh and the relationship of the Hindu and Bahá'í Faiths."

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

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"Concerning Hindu prophecies of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh and the [relationship of the Hindu and Bahá'í Faiths](#), nothing authentic and specific is available at the World Centre, apart from the Guardian's statement in [God Passes By](#) that 'To Him the [Bhagavad-Gita](#) of the Hindus had referred as the "Most Great Spirit," the "[Tenth Avatar](#)", the "Immaculate Manifestation of the [Krishna](#)"', (p. 95); and a brief reference to Bahá'u'lláh as 'to the Hindus the reincarnation of [Krishna](#) . . . ' (p. 94). Bahá'í teachings on [progressive revelation](#) do, of course, bear on the relationship of these Faiths. In a letter written on behalf of the beloved Guardian it is also written that 'We cannot be sure of the authenticity of the scriptures of [Buddha](#) and [Krishna](#) . . . ' (November 25, 1950); and in reply to a question as to whether [Brahma](#) is 'to be considered as referring to absolute diety' and [Krishna](#) 'as the Prophet of the Hindu Religion', his secretary wrote ' . . . such matters, as no reference occurs to them in the Teachings, are left for students of history and religion to resolve and clarify.' (April 14, 1941)"

(From a letter dated September 1, 1977 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)



Comments

September 1. On this date in 1983, the UHJ wrote the NSA of Norway about "meditation and kindred subjects. The House of Justice is aware that such matters have been a cause of differences of opinion among the Norwegian Bahá'ís," outlining six "essential requisites for our spiritual growth."

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

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The recital each day of one of the Obligatory Prayers with pure-hearted devotion.

The regular reading of the Sacred Scriptures, specifically at least each morning and evening, with reverence, attention and thought.

Prayerful meditation on the Teachings, so that we may understand them more deeply, fulfil them more faithfully, and convey them more accurately to others.

Striving every day to bring our behaviour more into accordance with the high standards that are set forth in the Teachings.

Teaching the Cause of God.

Selfless service in the work of the Cause and in the carrying on of our trade or profession.



Comments

September 1. On this date in 1984, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar in Samoa was dedicated. Built at a cost of \$6,500,000, it was one of the achievements of the Seven Year Plan.

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Comments

September 1. On this date in 2018, Ehsan Yarshater, the former Bahá'í scholar who was Hagop Kevorkian Professor Emeritus of Iranian Studies at Columbia University, died in California.

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

September 1. On this date in 2019, [Ehsan Yarshater](#), the [former Bahá'í](#) scholar who was Hagop Kevorkian Professor Emeritus of Iranian Studies at Columbia University, died in California.

On April 3, 1920, [Ehsan Yarshater](#) was born in Hamadan, Iran to a prominent Jewish Bahá'í family. His family was part of a group of Jewish converts from that city who during the late 19th century became the largest group of non-Muslim converts to the Bahá'í Faith. Ehsan's father received a tablet from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, referring to him as "Yarshater" (meaning "[agile friend](#)" which they choose to be their family name. [Ehsan Yarshater](#) had a long and distinguished academic career in the field of Iranian studies. He was the founder and editor-in-chief of the [Encyclopædia Iranica](#). [Ehsan Yarshater dissociated from the Bahá'í Faith as an adult](#) due to reasons related to restrictions imposed by Shoghi Effendi on academic freedom and travel of Iranian Bahá'ís to the West.

He died on September 1, 2018, in California.

The following [biography of PROFESSOR EHSAN YARSHATER](#) has been taken from his personal home page, originally an account of his life and career by Professors M. Boyce of London University and G. Windfuhr of Michigan University in *Acta Iranica* 30, *Papers in Honor of Professor Ehsan Yarshater*, Leiden, Holland, 1990, pp. ix-xxiii.

Professor Ehsan Yarshater

He was born on April 3, 1920 in Hamadan of a family which originated in Kashan. His father, a businessman, had a bent for learning, read widely and taught himself Arabic and

Esperanto. His mother, a lady of great refinement, had a deep love of nature and the fine arts. She herself possessed a beautiful singing voice, and played the ney; and she inspired in her son a love of music and literature, and impressed on him also the need to study hard and become a useful member of society. But she died young, when he was only eleven, and his father a year later a heavy double sorrow. He went then to live in Tehran with his maternal uncle, a well-known philanthropist whose benefactions included the building and endowing of the Mithaqiyya Hospital. Ehsan Yarshater's schooling had been interrupted; but in 1934 he won a scholarship to the newly opened Normal School (Danesh-saraye Moqaddamati). There the teacher of Persian literature, Mohammad 'Ali 'Ameri, made a deep impression on him, and by encouraging him to memorize a great number of passages of excellent Persian poetry and prose, helped him to form his own pure and elegant style. From there a second scholarship took him to the Teachers' College, Tehran University, where he studied Persian language and literature under such outstanding scholars as Ebrahim Pour-Davud, Mohammad Taqi Bahar, Ahmad Bahmanyar, Badi' al-Zaman Foruzanfar, Sayyid Kazem 'Assar and 'Abbas Eqbal Ashtiyani. Following their courses gave him a deep knowledge of Iran's literature and history, although looking back he came to regret the lack of teaching in other languages and literatures. This gap he worked hard to fill for himself in later years.

In 1941 he obtained the degree of B.A. (Licence-ès-Lettres), and began teaching at the 'Elmiyya School in Tehran; and two years later he was appointed associate director of the Normal School there. While holding these posts he studied law, obtaining a second B.A. in that subject in 1944. He then proceeded with his literary studies under the supervision of 'Ali Asghar Hekmat, and in 1947 was awarded at D. Litt. with distinction for a dissertation on "Persian poetry in the second half of the ninth century." (This was published, with some revisions, in 1955 .)

He was then appointed Assistant Professor of Persian in the Faculty of Theology; but was awarded in the same year a fellowship by the British Council to study educational methods in England. When in London he called on W.B. Henning, and, swiftly appreciating the depth of his learning, resolved to abandon other plans and study pre-Islamic Iranian languages and culture with him. His interest in this field had already been awakened by Pour-Davud; but at that time the teaching available in it in Tehran was at an elementary level. He enrolled accordingly for one of the courses created by Henning at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University, in Old and Middle Iranian; and years of exacting study followed, during which he had to add English and German to his knowledge of French, and to absorb analytic and critical methods of handling texts. In addition,

he set himself, with energy and discernment, to learn all that he could of Western art and architecture, painting and music, using part of the vacations to travel in other European countries for this purpose.

Henning himself was deeply interested at this time in the dialects of north-western Iran. In 1950 he had been able to make brief notes on one of them, to the south-west of Qazvin, and this, he thought, might prove to be a link in a long chain of related dialects, all in imminent danger of dying out. The evidence was too scanty, however, for this to be then more than a well-reasoned piece of deduction. With Henning's encouragement, Ehsan Yarshater determined to undertake the search for such dialects, and this developed into his scholarly lifework. With it he was to make a major contribution to Iranian linguistic studies, recording and analysing dialect after dialect of what he came to term the Tati-Taleshi groups, and gaining a rich store of knowledge that fully substantiated Henning's brilliant but tentative surmise. His work was much appreciated by Henning himself, who over the years provided Ehsan Yarshater with "enriching advice, friendship and support."

In 1953 Ehsan Yarshater, having obtained the degree of M.A. by examination, returned to Iran to pursue this research; but there was much else there to claim his attention. He was at once appointed lecturer in ancient Iranian languages in the Faculty of Letters at Tehran University, and assistant to Pour-Davud. Some excellent students attended his classes, and he is gratefully remembered by them, as by numerous generations of their successors, for the clarity and detail of his teaching, his patience and evenness of temper, and his concern for their progress. (Thus once, when a strike closed the university, he continued quietly giving his courses at his own home rather than let their work be interrupted.) His standards were exacting; and conscious, with his own phenomenal memory, of the advantages of storing knowledge in the mind, he required his students to combine analytical work with some learning by heart, including passages from Old Persian inscriptions.

Ehsan Yarshater found time nevertheless to embark on the first of his many field trips to study dialects; and these were to be the most enjoyable of this many scholarly undertakings, combining as they did the intellectual pleasure of discovery with the keen delight of travel to remote parts of Iran and the exploration of village life and traditions. Such travel involved, however, a considerable measure of physical hardship and hours of exacting work, during which his informants were apt to flag long before he wished to release them. In 1956 the Société de la dialectologie iranienne was founded, with G. Redard, G. Morgenstierne and E. Benveniste as active members; and Ehsan Yarshater, as vice-president, was made responsible for supervising the recording of dialects throughout Iran.

This blend of teaching, administrative duties and strenuous research would for most scholars have made up a full working life; but during his years in England Ehsan Yarshater had been forming plans to fill gaps which he had come to perceive in the cultural life of Iran; and in 1954 he took the major step of founding the *Bong'h-e Tarjoma va Nashr-e Ketāb* (Institute for the Translation and Publication of Books) . Under his direction this was to make a massive contribution in the following decades to the intellectual life of the nation. Its primary aim was to have foreign works of recognized worth translated into Persian by scholars of repute, the translations to be carefully edited and accurately printed. In the long run it was hoped that the venture would be largely self-supporting, but Ehsan Yarshater obtained initial funding from the Crown Properties. This was the first instance of his ability, as a practical visionary and skilful, patient diplomat, to obtain financial support for a nobly conceived plan. The series of translations was inaugurated with five books published simultaneously in 1955, and others followed in rapid succession, to be swiftly bought up by an appreciative readership. Although his own work lay in higher education, Ehsan Yarshater was deeply concerned with the intellectual development of children; and a year later he inaugurated three series of works for different age groups among the young, some of them translations, some original writings. These too were eagerly acquired.

In 1957 he persuaded a number of scholars, notably among them Iraj Afshar, to join him in founding the *Anjoman-e Ketab* (Book Society) . Its purpose was to foster interest in good publications, and its main organ was the *Rahnema-ye Ketab* (Book Guide), which was launched by Ehsan Yarshater that same year as a quarterly journal, with Afshar and M. Moqarrabi as associate editors. From its second year it became a monthly journal, and was expanded to include as well as book reviews articles on Persian language and literature, accounts of rare manuscripts and, latterly, surveys of current research in Iranian studies. From 1965 Afshar was editor in charge, and under his direction annual bibliographies were published of Persian printed books. The *Anjoman-e Ketab* also organized annual book exhibitions in Tehran, and sponsored exhibitions of Persian books abroad.

With all this activity even Ehsan Yarshater was fully stretched, working as has been his wont through much of his life, a twelve to fourteen hour day. Yet he managed during these years to write a number of learned and literary articles for the journals *Yahma*, *Mehr* and *Sokhan*, as well as for the *Bulletin of the Faculty of Letters of Tehran University*. One day, meeting him in the Senate Library, Habib Yaghma'i pressed him for another article for his journal; whereupon Ehsan Yarshater, characteristically unable to refuse a friend, sat down and there and then wrote a piece which he called "The respected scholar" (*Daneshmand-e mohtaram*) . This, published as the leading article in *Yaghma*, has been twice reprinted in

anthologies, and is often quoted as an admirable piece of satirical humour. For all his deep seriousness, Ehsan Yarshater has a rich vein of wit and humour, is quick to make or appreciate a jest, and breaks readily into warm, delightful laughter.

Another striking facet of Ehsan Yarshater's character is his apparently effortless calm and self-control, maintained in the teeth of all the harassments that inevitably beset a man who initiates far-reaching plans, and who in the course of fulfilling them has to persuade large numbers of people, with different temperaments and interests, to cooperate and be reasonable. With this calmness goes iron resolve, once a goal has been fixed upon, and enviable powers of concentration. These struck even German scholars during a visit Ehsan Yarshater paid to Göttingen to study dialect materials there. While others came and went during the day, seeking refreshment, fresh air or relaxation, he sat on at his library desk from early till late, oblivious alike of the outer world and the inner man, working with total absorption.

During the academic year 1958/59 he visited Columbia University, New York, as associate professor; and Columbia showed appreciation of his teaching by extending its invitation for a second year. Back in Iran during the summer of 1959 Ehsan Yarshater inspired the founding of a lending library by the Anjoman-e Ketab. This came to contain some 3000 books, mostly in the humanities, which people were actively encouraged to borrow, and for a time small mobile collections of books were sent to some of the poorer districts of Tehran, as well as to townships round about.

When Ehsan Yarshater returned from Columbia in the summer of 1960, Pour-Davud had died, and he was appointed to succeed his former teacher as professor of Old Persian and Avestan. In that year he attended the International Congress of Orientalists in Moscow; and the oral examination was held there of his thesis on "The Tati dialect spoken to the south of Qazvin", for which he was awarded a Ph.D. by London University. The examiners were W.B. Henning, E. Benveniste and I. Gershevitch.

In the following year Ehsan Yarshater had the happiness to marry Latifeh Alvieh. The two had become friends when he returned from his studies in England in 1953, and had come to discover much in common, notably a deep devotion to Iran and its culture, and an interest in education generally. Latifeh Alvieh was then acting as cultural advisor to the United States Information Agency in Tehran; and her voluntary work included organizing and directing summer camps for schools and university students, and the first youth conference in Iran. She was founder and president of the Shahnaz Girls' Clubs, and a founding member of the National Council of the Women of Iran; and had represented various Irani-

an organizations at conferences in Germany, India, Ceylon and Turkey, as well as having studied for a year on a visiting fellowship in the United States of America. After their marriage she and Ehsan Yarshater, as well as pursuing their own separate but complementary activities, created together a gracious and profoundly civilized home-life, dispensing a generous hospitality which many were to enjoy over the years.

Meantime Columbia University was expanding its Middle East department, and with financial help from Hagop Kevorkian had established a chair in Iranian Studies, which in 1961 Ehsan Yarshater was invited to occupy. After much hesitation, and prolonged discussions with his wife, he accepted and embarked thus on an even more arduous but richly productive period of his life. During it he worked immensely hard in New York for three-quarters of the year, and returned every long vacation to Iran to work immensely hard there. He retained the directorship of the Bongah-e Tarjoma, keeping in close touch from the United States with a succession of deputy directors; and he continued as president of the Anjoman-e Ketab, the Rahnema-ye Ketab being mainly in charge of Iraj Afshar. Each summer, after a busy university session, he found awaiting him in Tehran a quantity of matters - scholarly, administrative and financial- which demanded his attention; and a press of people impatient to discuss with him, sometimes at great length, their own particular problems. Yet even in these circumstances his first act was always to set in motion arrangements for a field trip to study yet another dialect which he had identified as little known or insufficiently explored.

At Columbia University he was deeply engaged in developing undergraduate and graduate courses, teaching and supervising, and taking his full part in departmental and university duties. He was also planning volumes for a projected series of translations of Persian classical works called Persian Heritage Series. UNESCO had a similar project in hand, under the title of Persian Representative Works, but it was making little progress. In 1962 the UNESCO department concerned proposed that their undertaking should be merged with Ehsan Yarshater's. This series was funded largely by the Bongah-e Tarjoma, with smaller contributions by UNESCO; and its agreed aim was to make "the best of Persian literary, historical and scientific texts available in the major world languages ... not only to satisfy the needs of the students of Persian history and culture, but also to respond to the demands of the intelligent reader who seeks to broaden his intellectual and artistic horizons." Under Ehsan Yarshater's direction the publication of volumes in this important new series proceeded apace.

From 1964 to 1966 he was granted extended sabbatical leave, which he spent in Iran. The royal Pahlavi Foundation was established in 1964, and the prestigious Bongah-e Tarjoma

was made one of its affiliates. "In editorial matters, however, the Institute continued to maintain essentially an independent stance, with the director exerting full discretion in the choice of works and the selection of authors, editors and translators in the series published under his general editorship."

As well as devoting much time to the Bongah's affairs during these two years, Ehsan Yarshater brought out in two volumes his own Naqqashi-e novin (Modern Painting) . This he published under the pen-name Rahsepar, which he had used as art-critic over the years for the journal Sokhan (published by his friend P.N. Khanlari). His reason for seeking anonymity was that he regarded these writings as the fruit of an amateur interest only; but Naqqashi-e novin, reprinted in 1975, remains the only substantial work of recognized merit in Persian devoted to this subject. Chapters from it have been prescribed for class-work, and others have been included, for the quality of their writing, in Jalal Matini's Nemunahai az nathr-e fasih-e mo'aser (An Anthology of Contemporary Eloquent Persian Prose.)

His dominant professional interest continued to be his dialect studies, and these two sabbatical years gave him further opportunities for intensive field work. His researches, which had begun in the 1950's with southern Tati, had been extended during the intervening years; and down to 1979 he was able to work systematically over a wide area, which included Taleshi-speaking districts on the west Caspian coast, Khalkhal and Tarom in Azerbaijan, Kho'in and the Zanjan region, Rudbar, Kuhpaya and Alamut to the east of Qazvin and Ramand to the south of it, with the Sava and Kashan districts, and regions yet further south where Central dialects are spoken. In recording many largely unknown or ill-explored village dialects of this area Ehsan Yarshater has shown great exactness and analytical skill, and his attention to detail in both phonology and morphology makes his work outstanding among recent contributions to Iranian dialectology, setting him in the great tradition of Andreas and Mann, Zhukovsky, Christensen and Morgenstierne. He is never a reductionist, nor one to gloss over problems by superimposing a phoneme where there is variation; and with his care for detail he truly shows language at work. His descriptions are full of precise observations about differences in usage between speakers of different ages, and even between inhabitants of different quarters of the same village; and where documents exist he has studied the changes between earlier and modern speech. He sets this minute recording in a wider context by consistently noting similarities between dialects and dialect-groups; and he has traced changes (as for example in post-positional patterns) which may reflect usages in the Turkish superstratum. He observes moreover the ways of life and social interactions which tend to bring about linguistic

interference such as by Turkic with Iranian, or by one form of Iranian with another. No description of an Iranian dialect offers a more delicate analysis of intricate relationships (such as morphological case, number and gender-marking in relation to the scales of animacy, reference and thematicity) than his study of southern Tati; and this makes it ideal for use in typological studies and general works on variation and language change. Nor is there anything comparable to his study of gender in the dialects of the Kashan area, with its admirable analysis of the multiple parameters, only a few of which have ever attracted the attention of researchers. The same precision and depth characterize his coverage of whole areas and his attention to minute difference between closely related dialects; and this has then enabled him to trace the network of linguistic change on a micro-scale.

On a larger scale his work has been nothing less than the rediscovery of the descendants of ancient Median, long thought wholly to have disappeared. He named his book on southern Tati "Median Dialect Studies I", and convincingly justified this title by his masterly summary of what is known of the languages of Azarbaijan in the Middle Ages and pre-modern times. This study included in fact Greater Media with Media Atropatene; and in it he showed that it had been wrong to suppose that the Iranian dialects spoken within Azarbaijan were immigrant ones from other regions. Instead he was able to establish that the dialects which he had studied reflect a linguistic continuum from Azarbaijan southward to where the Taleshi dialects join the northernmost Tati ones, with the southernmost Tati ones then linking up in their turn with those of the central dialects. He also discovered the importance within this continuum of the Iranian dialects spoken by local Jewish communities, which he studied extensively in Tehran, Hamadan, Isfahan, Kashan, Golpayegan and other towns, together with the "secret" Perso-Aramaic language which some of them used. His conclusion was that "the Jewish dialects and sub-dialects are the indicators of Median dialects long forced out from urban centers by Persian. In other words, whereas Persian is the intruder in Western and Central Persia (that is, the Median territory) the Jewish dialects are native." His researches as a whole led him to the major discovery that some western Iranian dialects are as conservative as some eastern Iranian ones, and that the traditional perception (based essentially on Middle Persian, Parthian and modern Persian with its variants) of a morphologically wanting western Iranian is misleading, this being in fact by no means typical. It seems very fitting that an Iranian scholar from Hamadan, once the capital of Media, should have discovered these remarkable facts, and should by his labours have thrown so much new light on the linguistic heritage of western Iran.

This important and prolonged research continued to be interwoven by Ehsan Yarshater with his work at Columbia University, to which he returned in the late summer of 1966.

Soon afterwards he established a Center for Iranian Studies there, of which he continues to be the director; and the next year he organized a major conference on all aspects of contemporary Iranian life, together with an exhibition of Persian painting < the most extensive that had then been held. The conference papers were edited by him, and were published in 1971 under the title *Iran Faces the Seventies*. In 1968, Ehsan Yarshater was elected chairman of the Middle East department, and served in this capacity until 1973, when he resigned in order to be able to devote more time to developing the activities of the Center.

Meantime in Iran the *Bongah-e Tarjoma*, still under his direction, continued to be vigorously active. The first "Foreign Literature Series" (*Majmu'a-ye adabiyat-e khareji*) was in the end to contain 71 works, and the various series for children and young readers, together, 155 titles. To these had been added an "Iranology Series" (*Majmu'a-ye Iran-shenasi*), which consisted of translations of works by Western orientalists and classical writers, and by Muslim historians and geographers in Arabic. This comprised some 60 volumes. There was also a "Persian Texts Series", devoted to critical editions of Persian texts which were either unpublished or available only in uncritical editions. This series, which reached 48 volumes, "represented the first attempt in Iran to publish Persian texts systematically. It adopted, under Yarshater's general editorship, the common method of critical editions in the West, best exemplified in Iran by M. Qazvini, with the manuscripts clearly defined and the significant variants recorded in the footnotes."

A general knowledge series was also launched, which consisted primarily of works of popular science, and which reached 138 volumes; but after the early ones had appeared Ehsan Yarshater relinquished its general editorship to Mohammad Sa'idi.

Another important scholarly series was of bibliographies. This was initiated in 1958 with the publication of the "Bibliography of Persian Printed Books" (*Fehrest-e ketabha-ye chapi-e farsi*) by Khanbaba Moshar. A second volume appeared in 1961, and a three-volumed second edition in 1973. There were moreover a number of other series, for science, art, history and philosophy, which were begun later and so remained less extensive than the earlier ones.

In 1969 the *Bongah* adopted a proposal put forward by Ehsan Yarshater to translate into Persian the second edition of the "Encyclopaedia of Islam", with supplementary articles to be specially commissioned to expand the entries on Iran. The first fascicle of the "Encyclopaedia of Iran and Islam" (*Danesh-nama-ye Iran va Eslam*) was published in 1975 with 112

original entries and 99 translated from the "Encyclopaedia of Islam"'s and eight more fascicles appeared during the next three years.

Meanwhile, in 1972, Ehsan Yarshater presented to the National Endowment for the Humanities, an American federal agency, through Columbia University, a proposal for an "Encyclopaedia Iranica" in the English language. This he conceived as a research tool, to meet the needs of scholars and students in Iranian studies and related fields by providing accurate and up-to-date presentations on "topics of archaeological, geographic, ethnographic, historical, artistic, literary, religious, linguistic, philosophical, scientific and folkloric interest," over a stretch of time extending from prehistory to the present; and he suggested that it should aim at setting Iranian culture in a broad context, and showing reciprocal influences exerted on one another by Iran and its neighbours. The plan was a noble one, and its scope so huge that probably no individual scholar could have won a hearing for it other than Ehsan Yarshater, who already had so many massive achievements to his credit, and who was known not only for initiating but also for carrying through large undertakings. He was also a persuasive advocate; and not only did the National Endowment for the Humanities provide some funding but generous support was offered by the Iranian Plan Organization. Accordingly the great undertaking got under way, and the first contracts were signed with contributors in 1979.

Two years earlier Ehsan Yarshater and his wife had decided to use their private means to endow a foundation that would ensure that work on the Encyclopaedia and other major projects which he had initiated could continue after him. By 1979 the legal work had been completed, trustees were appointed, and the foundation was about to be registered with the Ministry of Justice when revolution broke out in Iran. The work of the Bongah-e Tarjoma, which was affiliated with the Pahlavi Foundation, was brought to an immediate halt.

Subsequently the new government took over the Bongah, and tacitly acknowledged the admirable work which it had been doing over the previous quarter of a century by continuing to operate it under its own name. Some works were published which were already in the press (including two more fascicles of the "Encyclopaedia of Iran and Islam"). A fairly large number of the Bongah's publications were moreover reprinted in the course of time, a further tribute to the excellence of its work. Its library was also expanded by the addition of that of the Anjoman-e Ketab, which, with its journal Rahnema-ye Ketab, was closed down. But in 1981 the Bongah itself was merged, with some other organizations, in a new "Center for Scientific and Cultural Organizations," renamed in 1986 the "Scientific and Cultural Publication Company" (Markaz-e Entesharat-e 'Elmi va Farhangi).

In the very year of the revolution Ehsan Yarshater had convened a meeting in England of the panel of consulting editors of the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*; and he found himself facing this meeting with funding for the project suddenly and drastically reduced, while he felt himself still with obligations to staff, printers and publishers, as well as to the large number of scholars who had been drawn into the undertaking, some of whom had already written contributions for it. Nevertheless, almost anyone else would have given up at this point, yielding to the force of large and unforeseen events. But for Ehsan Yarshater great odds seem only a challenge to still greater endeavour, when the cause is a worthy one; and he resolved to continue in the hope that he could raise new funding somehow. In this he was successful, thanks to his own qualities and achievements, and tenacity of purpose. But it is a continuing struggle, which swallows up all too much of his time and energy at the expense of purely scholarly pursuits.

From then on the complex and arduous work of compiling and producing the *Encyclopaedia* has been carried on at the Center for Iranian Studies, Columbia University chiefly with the continued support of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The first fascicles were published in 1982, and by the end of 1989 three bound volumes had come out, with ten more planned to follow over the years. The undertaking has benefited from unremitting labours of a succession of assistant editors, notably among them M. Kasheff, who began working on the "*Encyclopaedia of Iran and Islam*", transferring without break to the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*; and latterly P.O. Skjaervø; but the driving force and inspiration continues to be Ehsan Yarshater, who oversees its every aspect. For this, long experience has uniquely qualified him, both on the practical and scholarly sides; and his extraordinary width of knowledge is invaluable for the choice of rubrics and invitation of contributors. There are few Persian writers and men of learning of the twentieth century whom he has not known, few Iranists whose work he has not read and remembered, perhaps no aspect of Iranian history and culture to which he has not devoted some attention. The usefulness of the *Encyclopaedia* is generally recognized; and it is proving not only an indispensable source of knowledge, but is itself a stimulus to research and fresh thinking on the part of scholars who are invited to contribute, and who respond to the opportunities which it provides. The heavy burdens which it lays on its chief editor have unfortunately kept his own contributions relatively few; but they have ranged characteristically widely, with a number of entries on Iranian dialects, a vivid and sympathetic account of the village of Abyana, and a meticulously documented article on Afrasiyab. He has made moreover striking contributions from his own unique knowledge to articles by others, for example to that on the great modern Persian singer Banan.

Since all his labours on the Encyclopaedia have been in addition to his full-time professional work at Columbia University, it seems incredible that even Ehsan Yarshater should have been engaged at the same time on another major task; but since the early 1970s he had been preparing, as general editor and contributor, the third volume of the Cambridge History of Iran, devoted to the Seleucid, Parthian and Sasanian periods. This massive work, in two parts, was planned to compass "every aspect of Iranian civilisation from the death of Alexander in 323 B.C. to the advent of Islam in the seventh century A.D." There were 33 contributors, and their contributions came in irregularly over a number of years, with many delays and difficulties; and as they were assembled it became clear to Ehsan Yarshater that the enormous time span and diversity of subject-matter were going to present problems for the general reader. Accordingly he went beyond what most would consider to be the call of editorial duty, providing the work with a long, lucid and deeply perceptive introduction, in which he provided guidelines to the whole; and he also set concise introductory pieces before each of the nine main sections into which it is divided. His own contributions comprised chapters on "Iranian common beliefs and world-view," "Iranian national history," and "Mazdakism." The volume appeared in 1983; and the first print was sold out with the same rapidity that had marked the purchase of publications of the Bongah-e Tarjoma.

Just a little later yet another massive undertaking, which had been initiated by Ehsan Yarshater in 1971, began to bear fruit. This was an annotated English translation of Tabari's "History of Prophets and Kings" (*Tarikh al-rusul wal moluk*). Ehsan Yarshater had suggested this as a desirable enterprise to UNESCO, for consideration by its Arabic Commission; but since that commission favored other tasks, he himself undertook it, with UNESCO's approval, under the auspices of the Bongah. Only a few contracts had been signed with scholars when the Bongah was closed down, and funding had again to be sought elsewhere. It came to be provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities; and publication of the History, to be in 40 volumes, began in 1985. Seventeen volumes have by now appeared, with ten in the press. Ehsan Yarshater sometimes regrets his involvement in this work, more properly the domain of Arabists; but, again, it is not in his character to abandon a task once embarked on.

The work of the Iranian Center proceeded vigorously meanwhile, and was diversified. The publication of volumes in the multilingual, multinational Persian Heritage Series continued steadily; and the Columbia Iranian Lecture Series, founded and endowed by Ehsan Yarshater in 1979, brought a succession of Iranists from other universities in the States and abroad to give an annual set of lectures. This was fittingly inaugurated by the great Iranist

H.W. Bailey, and his and three other sets of lectures have so far been published in book form. Subsequently in 1987, Ehsan Yarshater established an Iranian Seminar, whose meetings are regularly attended by Iranists from New York's universities and those of neighbouring states, and often, by invitation or the chance of travel by others from farther afield. Both lectures and seminars are occasions for stimulating discussion and the fruitful sharing of knowledge. With his capacities and experience, it was inevitable that Ehsan Yarshater should be elected member of a number of councils and committees, among them the Council of Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum (from 1954); the Iranian branch of the International Council for Philosophy and the Human Sciences (of which he was general secretary from 1957 to 1961); the National Translation Council, Columbia University (from 1976); and the American Institute of Iranian Studies (trustee from 1978).

One of Ehsan Yarshater¹'s special gifts was threatened with total neglect under the huge pressure of professorial, scholarly, editorial and administrative work, namely his writing of elegant Persian; but latterly his friend Jalal Matini has persuaded him to contribute from time to time short notes (yaddashtha) to the journals *Iran Nameh* and *Iran Shenasi*, both edited in the United States; and these have given much pleasure to its readers.

All this vast amount of achievement could be accomplished only by long toil; and often after a hard day's work Ehsan Yarshater return in the late evening to his office at the Iran Center (which is interconnected with his apartment), to put in more hours of concentrated work at his desk there. He has been fortunate to have in his wife a lady who not only understands but supports such dedication, matching it indeed with hard work and idealism of her own. Once settled in the United States, she studied for a B.A. (1975) and M.A. (1981) at Columbia University, published articles, and applied her knowledge and experience through serving on numerous councils and committees; and from 1986 she has worked part-time at the Middle East Institute of Columbia University as co-ordinator of its Outreach Program, which aims at bringing accurate knowledge of Middle Eastern affairs to students, teachers and the general public.

Events in Iran in the past decade have brought deep personal sorrows to the Yarshaters, as to many other Iranian families. These they have borne with characteristic courage and dignity. Nor is life for them ever wholly toil. There is music, poetry and the visual arts to be enjoyed; and friends and colleagues treasure memories of their delightful hospitality, with wide-ranging talk, rich reminiscences, wit and laughter.

He has always been a lover of sport and the open air; and in his student days he went on long mountain walks with friends in the Alborz, and later skied there. For a long time it was

mainly his dialect studies which took him from his desk; but latterly a threat of ill-health from unremitting work has forced him out of doors again for recreation. He goes regularly on long walks with the Appalachian Mountain Club, adding enjoyment of American natural beauty to his recollections of that of his much loved motherland; and it is to be hoped that with retirement he will take to the mountain trails more often, thus keeping his health and strength, and being able to see to completion the formidable enterprises which he has in hand (notably among them the publication of many notes and texts gathered during his field-work in Iran, and still to be edited). He has already made profound contributions to Persian scholarship and letters, and Iran and Iranian studies owe him immense debts. May he live to increase that indebtedness, and to enjoy the satisfaction of large tasks fulfilled and new knowledge continually gained.

M. Boyce

G. Windfuhr



Comments

September 2. On this date in 1912, during his tour of North America, 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave a talk in the Montreal home of the Maxwells where he presented his views on native cultures, Africans, indigenous North Americans and pre-Columbian America.

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

September 2. On this date in 1912, during his tour of North America, 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave a talk in the [Montreal home](#) of [William Sutherland Maxwell](#), (later named a Hand of the Cause by Shoghi Effendi in 1951) and [May Maxwell](#), the parents of Mary Maxwell, the future [Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum](#), wife of Shoghi Effendi. 'Abdu'l-Bahá presented his views on native cultures, Africans, indigenous North Americans and pre-Columbian America.

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum described the importance of this [Shrine](#) with the following words:

Things arise in historic perspective as time goes by. This is the only private home in Canada where 'Abdu'l-Bahá stayed. After His visit, it was always considered blessed by having been used by Him. For future generations, it will eventually grow in importance and sacredness, because He, the Centre of the Covenant, the Greatest Mystery of God, stayed here.

It was at this home that 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave his [talk discussing his views on native cultures, Africans, indigenous North Americans and pre-Columbian America](#):

Nature is the material world. When we look upon it, we see that it is dark and imperfect. For instance, if we allow a piece of land to remain in its natural condition, we will find it covered with thorns and thistles; useless weeds and wild vegetation will flourish upon it,

and it will become like a jungle. The trees will be fruitless, lacking beauty and symmetry; wild animals, noxious insects and reptiles will abound in its dark recesses. This is the incompleteness and imperfection of the world of nature. To change these conditions, we must clear the ground and cultivate it so that flowers may grow instead of thorns and weeds—that is to say, we must illumine the dark world of nature. In their primal natural state, the forests are dim, gloomy, impenetrable. Man opens them to the light, clears away the tangled underbrush and plants fruitful trees. Soon the wild woodlands and jungle are changed into productive orchards and beautiful gardens; order has replaced chaos; the dark realm of nature has become illumined and brightened by cultivation.

If man himself is left in his natural state, he will become lower than the animal and continue to grow more ignorant and imperfect. **The savage tribes of central Africa are evidences of this. Left in their natural condition, they have sunk to the lowest depths and degrees of barbarism, dimly groping in a world of mental and moral obscurity. If we wish to illumine this dark plane of human existence, we must bring man forth from the hopeless captivity of nature, educate him and show him the pathway of light and knowledge, until, uplifted from his condition of ignorance, he becomes wise and knowing; no longer savage and revengeful, he becomes civilized and kind; once evil and sinister, he is endowed with the attributes of heaven. But left in his natural condition without education and training, it is certain that he will become more depraved and vicious than the animal, even to the extreme degree witnessed among African tribes who practice cannibalism. It is evident, therefore, that the world of nature is incomplete, imperfect until awakened and illumined by the light and stimulus of education.**

In these days there are new schools of philosophy blindly claiming that the world of nature is perfect. If this is true, why are children trained and educated in schools, and what is the need of extended courses in sciences, arts and letters in colleges and universities? What would be the result if humanity were left in its natural condition without education or training? All scientific discoveries and attainments are the outcomes of knowledge and education. The telegraph, phonograph, telephone were latent and potential in the world of nature but would never have come forth into the realm of visibility unless man through education had penetrated and discovered the laws which control them. All the marvelous developments and miracles of what we call civilization would have remained hidden, unknown and, so to speak, nonexistent, if man had remained in his natural condition, deprived of the bounties, blessings and benefits of education and mental culture. The intrinsic difference between the ignorant man and the astute philosopher is that the

former has not been lifted out of his natural condition, while the latter has undergone systematic training and education in schools and colleges until his mind has awakened and unfolded to higher realms of thought and perception; otherwise, both are human and natural.

God has sent forth the Prophets for the purpose of quickening the soul of man into higher and divine recognitions. He has revealed the heavenly Books for this great purpose. For this the breaths of the Holy Spirit have been wafted through the gardens of human hearts, the doors of the divine Kingdom opened to mankind and the invisible inspirations sent forth from on high. This divine and ideal power has been bestowed upon man in order that he may purify himself from the imperfections of nature and uplift his soul to the realm of might and power. God has purposed that the darkness of the world of nature shall be dispelled and the imperfect attributes of the natal self be effaced in the effulgent reflection of the Sun of Truth. The mission of the Prophets of God has been to train the souls of humanity and free them from the thralldom of natural instincts and physical tendencies. They are like unto Gardeners, and the world of humanity is the field of Their cultivation, the wilderness and untrained jungle growth wherein They proceed to labor. They cause the crooked branches to become straightened, the fruitless trees to become fruitful, and gradually transform this great wild, uncultivated field into a beautiful orchard producing wonderful abundance and outcome.

If the world of nature were perfect and complete in itself, there would be no need of such training and cultivation in the human world—no need of teachers, schools and universities, arts and crafts. The revelations of the Prophets of God would not have been necessary, and the heavenly Books would have been superfluous. If the world of nature were perfect and sufficient for mankind, we would have no need of God and our belief in Him. Therefore, the bestowal of all these great helps and accessories to the attainment of divine life is because the world of nature is incomplete and imperfect. **Consider this Canadian country during the early history of Montreal when the land was in its wild, uncultivated and natural condition. The soil was unproductive, rocky and almost uninhabitable—vast forests stretching in every direction. What invisible power caused this great metropolis to spring up amid such savage and forbidding conditions? It was the human mind. Therefore, nature and the effect of nature's laws were imperfect. The mind of man remedied and removed this imperfect condition, until now we behold a great city instead of a savage unbroken wilderness. Before the coming of Columbus America itself was a wild, uncultivated expanse of primeval forest, mountains and rivers—a very world of nature. Now it has become the world of man. It was dark, for-**

bidding and savage; now it has become illumined with a great civilization and prosperity. Instead of forests, we behold productive farms, beautiful gardens and prolific orchards. Instead of thorns and useless vegetation, we find flowers, domestic animals and fields awaiting harvest. If the world of nature were perfect, the condition of this great country would have been left unchanged.

If a child is left in its natural state and deprived of education, there is no doubt that it will grow up in ignorance and illiteracy, its mental faculties dulled and dimmed; in fact, it will become like an animal. This is evident among the savages of central Africa, who are scarcely higher than the beast in mental development.

The conclusion is irresistible that the splendors of the Sun of Truth, the Word of God, have been the source and cause of human upbuilding and civilization. The world of nature is the kingdom of the animal. In its natural condition and plane of limitation the animal is perfect. The ferocious beasts of prey have been completely subject to the laws of nature in their development. They are without education or training; they have no power of abstract reasoning and intellectual ideals; they have no touch with the spiritual world and are without conception of God or the Holy Spirit. The animal can neither recognize nor apprehend the spiritual power of man and makes no distinction between man and itself, for the reason that its susceptibilities are limited to the plane of the senses. It lives under the bondage of nature and nature's laws. All the animals are materialists. They are deniers of God and without realization of a transcendent power in the universe. They have no knowledge of the divine Prophets and Holy Books—mere captives of nature and the sense world. In reality they are like the great philosophers of this day who are not in touch with God and the Holy Spirit—deniers of the Prophets, ignorant of spiritual susceptibilities, deprived of the heavenly bounties and without belief in the supernatural power. The animal lives this kind of life blissfully and untroubled, whereas the material philosophers labor and study for ten or twenty years in schools and colleges, denying God, the Holy Spirit and divine inspirations. The animal is even a greater philosopher, for it attains the ability to do this without labor and study. For instance, the cow denies God and the Holy Spirit, knows nothing of divine inspirations, heavenly bounties or spiritual emotions and is a stranger to the world of hearts. Like the philosophers, the cow is a captive of nature and knows nothing beyond the range of the senses. The philosophers, however, glory in this, saying, "We are not captives of superstitions; we have implicit faith in the impressions of the senses and know nothing beyond the realm of nature, which contains and covers everything." But the cow, without study or proficiency in the sciences, modestly and quietly

views life from the same standpoint, living in harmony with nature's laws in the utmost dignity and nobility.

This is not the glory of man. The glory of man is in the knowledge of God, spiritual susceptibilities, attainment to transcendent powers and the bounties of the Holy Spirit. The glory of man is in being informed of the teachings of God. This is the glory of humanity. Ignorance is not glory but darkness. Can these souls who are steeped in the lower strata of ignorance become informed of the mysteries of God and the realities of existence while Jesus Christ was without knowledge of them? Is the intellect of these people greater than the intellect of Christ? Christ was heavenly, divine and belonged to the world of the Kingdom. He was the embodiment of spiritual knowledge. His intellect was superior to these philosophers, His comprehension deeper, His perception keener, His knowledge more perfect. How is it that He overlooked and denied Himself everything in this world? He attached little importance to this material life, denying Himself rest and composure, accepting trials and voluntarily suffering vicissitudes because He was endowed with spiritual susceptibilities and the power of the Holy Spirit. He beheld the splendors of the divine Kingdom, embodied the bounties of God and possessed ideal powers. He was illumined with love and mercy, and so, likewise, were all the Prophets of God.



Comments

September 2. On this date in 1959, the Custodians wrote new NSAs "Our attorney advises us that we should have a similar letter... 'We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith selected by the Hands of the Cause.'"

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

September 2. On this date in 1959, the Custodians [wrote](#) newly-formed National Spiritual Assemblies "Our attorney advises us that we should have a similar letter from each new National Assembly after it is formed. We therefore request that your Assembly adopt such a resolution, which should include the following sentence: 'We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith selected by the Hands of the Cause.'"

To the National Spiritual Assemblies formed during Ridvan, 1959

Shortly after the passing of the beloved Guardian, the [Hands in the Holy Land](#), acting upon the advice of our attorney, secured from each of the National Assemblies then in existence a letter recognizing the body of nine Hands serving in the Holy Land as the supreme body of the Faith, pending the establishment of the Universal House of Justice.

We enclose a photostat of a legal document, signed by the twenty-six [Hands of the Cause](#) present at the Conference in the [Mansion of Bahji](#) in November, 1957, setting up the body of nine Hands to act on behalf of all the [Hands of the Cause](#), under the legal title "The [Custodians](#) of the Bahá'í World Faith".

Our attorney advises us that we should have a similar letter from each new National Assembly after it is formed. We therefore request that your Assembly adopt such a resolution, which should include the following sentence:

We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the [Custodians](#) of the Bahá'í World Faith selected by the [Hands of the Cause](#).

This should be incorporated in a letter sent to us by your Assembly, signed by the Chairman and the Secretary.

The names of the nine Hands originally chosen appear on the photostat enclosed. The [Custodians](#) are empowered to call upon any of the other Hands to serve temporarily as a substitute for those unable for the time being to be present in the Holy Land.

Please keep the enclosed photostat in a safe place, but we ask you not to display it or give it general circulation.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

[HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND](#)



Comments

September 2. On this date in 1968, Ṭarāzu'lláh Samandarí, a Hand of the Cause of God, died in Israel. Born in Qazvin to a prominent Bahá'í family, he was the son of Kázim-i-Samandar, an Apostle of Bahá'u'lláh, and his grandmother had accompanied Ṭáhirih.

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Ṭarāzu'lláh Samandarí's sister, Thurayyá Samandarí, was married to [Díyá'u'lláh](#), the second son of Bahá'u'lláh through his second wife [Fatimih](#) (also known as Mahd-i-'Ulya). Because they sided with [Muhammad 'Alí](#) in his argument with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, both Thurayyá and [Díyá'u'lláh](#) were declared Covenant-breakers. After his death in 1898, Díyá'u'lláh had initially been buried next to his father at the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh at the Mansion of Bahjí. However, having been declared a Covenant-breaker, Díyá'u'lláh's remains were disinterred in 1965 in a process the Universal House of Justice [described](#) as a "purification... from past contamination."



Comments

September 2. On this date in 1982, the UHJ addressed a letter "to the Friends gathered in the Asian-Australasian Bahá'í Conference in Canberra" noting "The institutions of the old world order are crumbling and in disarray. Materialism, greed, corruption and conflict are infecting the social order.

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The Universal House of Justice 2 September 1982

To the Friends gathered in the Asian-Australasian Bahá'í Conference in Canberra

Dearly loved Friends,

These are momentous times. The institutions of the old world order are crumbling and in disarray. Materialism, greed, corruption and conflict are infecting the social order with a grave malaise from which it is helpless to extricate itself. With every passing day it becomes more and more evident that no time must be lost in applying the remedy prescribed by Bahá'u'lláh, and it is to this task that Bahá'ís everywhere must bend their energies and commit their resources.

New conditions now present themselves, making it easier to accomplish our purpose. **Galvanized by the fires of fierce opposition and nurtured by the blood of the martyrs, the forces of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh are, at long last, emerging from obscurity. Never before in history has the Faith been the subject of such universal attention and comment. Eminent statesmen, parliamentarians, journalists, writers, educators, commentators, clergymen and other leaders of thought have raised their voices and set their pens to expressions of horror and revulsion at the persecutions of our brethren in Iran on the one hand, and to paeans of praise and admiration of the noble principles which motivate the followers of the Most Great Name on the other.**

The five international conferences of the [Seven Year Plan](#) were called to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the [Greatest Holy Leaf](#), to discuss anew the present condition of the Faith in a turbulent world society, to examine the great opportunities for its future growth and development, and to focus attention on the unfulfilled goals of the [Plan](#) . We are certain that the contemplation of the gathered friends on the sterling qualities which distinguished the heroic life of the [Greatest Holy Leaf](#) will help them to persevere in their noble endeavors.

This particular Conference is unique in many ways. The geographical area of concern spans over half the globe, including within its purview all the vast continent of Asia as well as the water hemisphere which comprises all of Australasia. Within the continent of Asia is the "cradle of the principal religions of mankind ... above whose horizons, in modern times, the suns of two independent Revelations ... have successively arisen ... on whose Western extremity the [Qiblih](#) of the Bahá'í world has been definitely established ..." The first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Bahá'í world was erected on this continent under the direction of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and now another is arising on the Indian subcontinent in the midst of the world's largest Bahá'í community. In Australasia the Mother Temple of the Antipodes, dedicated to the Glory of God just two decades ago, looks out across the vast Pacific Ocean in whose "midmost heart" still another Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is being built on the mountain slope above Apia in the country of the first reigning monarch to embrace the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

The population of Asia and Australasia is well over half the world population. The area includes Asiatic U.S.S.R. and mainland China, accounting for more than one thousand million souls who are, for the most part, untouched by the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. Obviously present conditions in these areas call for the exercise of the utmost wisdom and circumspection. Yet this vast segment of humanity cannot be ignored.

Canberra, where you are now meeting, is at the southern pole of the spiritual axis referred to in the beloved Guardian's last message to the Bahá'ís of Australia as "extending from the Antipodes to the northern islands of the Pacific Ocean." Referring to the National Spiritual Assemblies at the northern and southern poles of that axis, Shoghi Effendi went on to say:

A responsibility, at once weighty and inescapable, must rest on the communities which occupy so privileged a position in so vast and turbulent an area of the globe. However great the distance that separates them; however much they differ in race, language, custom, and religion; however active the political forces which tend to keep them apart and foster racial and political antagonisms, the close and continued association of these communities in their common, their peculiar and paramount task of raising up and of consolidating the embryonic [World Order of Bahá'u'lláh](#) in those regions of the globe, is a matter of vital and urgent importance, which should receive on the part of the elected representatives of their communities, a most earnest and prayerful consideration.

These guidelines, penned a quarter of a century ago, are as valid today as when they were written, and can be taken to heart by all Bahá'í communities on either side of the axis.

We are approaching the midway point of the [Seven Year Plan](#). As we review our accomplishments with respect to the goals of that Plan, it is essential that we fortify ourselves for the tasks ahead, and that we rededicate ourselves to that Cause for which our beloved martyrs rendered their last full measure of devotion. We can do no less!

We shall be with you in spirit during your important deliberations. Our prayers ascend at the Holy Threshold for the success of your Conference and the International Conference being held concurrently in Montreal. We shall ardently supplicate that the blessings and confirmations of Bahá'u'lláh will descend upon you and surround you wherever you go in service to His Faith.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

[signed: The Universal House of Justice]



Comments

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The Universal House of Justice 2 September 1982

To the Friends gathered at the Bahá'í International Conference in Montreal

Dearly loved Friends,

Seventy years ago 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited Montreal, hallowing it forever. The visit of the beloved Master to America, the laying by Him of the cornerstone of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the West and the revelation by Him five years later of the [Tablets of the Divine Plan](#), which invest its chief executors and their allies with spiritual primacy, constitute successive stages in the gradual disclosure of a mission whose seeds can be found in the Báb's address to the people of the West, urging them to aid God's Holy Cause. This mission was given specific direction through [Bahá'u'lláh's summons to the rulers of America](#), calling on them to heal the injuries of the oppressed and, with the "rod of the commandments" of their Lord, to bring their corrective influence to bear upon the injustices perpetrated by the tyrannical and the ungodly. 'Abdu'l-Bahá revealed in clearer details than those given by either the Báb or Bahá'u'lláh the nature and scope of that glorious mission. In His eternal Tablets unveiling America's spiritual destiny the Master wrote, "The continent of America is, in the eyes of the one true God, the land wherein the splendors of

His light shall be revealed, where the mysteries of His Faith shall be unveiled, where the righteous will abide and the free assemble. Therefore, every section thereof is blessed ...” and, referring to Canada, He asserted that its future “is very great, and the events connected with it infinitely glorious.” Even more specifically, He expressed the “hope that in the future Montreal may become so stirred, that the melody of the Kingdom may travel to all parts of the world from that Dominion and the breaths of the Holy Spirit may spread from that center to the East and the West of America.”

After the passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and under the guidance of the Guardian the Bahá’ís of the world witnessed with awe and admiration the North American community arising as one man to champion the [Administrative Order](#) taking shape on their own soil, to embark upon the first collective teaching plan in the annals of the Faith, to lead the entire Bahá’í world in intercontinental teaching campaigns, to demonstrate with devotion their exemplary firmness in the Covenant, to extend their support and protection and relief to the oppressed followers of Bahá’u’lláh throughout the East and particularly in His native land, and to send forth valiant pioneers and traveling teachers to every continent of the globe. These marvelous and noble exertions, calling for the expenditure of resources almost beyond their means, paved the way for the achievement of glorious victories which synchronized with a series of world convulsions, signs of universal commotion and travail, and with repeated crises within the Faith. **And in this day, while the blood of the martyrs of Persia is once again watering the roots of the Cause of God and when the international outlook is impenetrably and ominously dark, the Bahá’ís of North America are in the van of the embattled legions of the Cause.**

Less than a score of years remain until the end of this century which the Master called “the century of light,” and He clearly foresaw that ere its termination an advanced stage would have been reached in the striving towards the political, racial, and religious unity of the peoples of the world, unfolding new horizons in scientific accomplishments, universal undertakings and world solidarity. The calls of the Master and the Guardian plainly summon the Bahá’ís of the Americas to prodigies of proclamation, of teaching and of service. The American melting pot of peoples needs the unifying power of the new Faith of God to achieve its fusion. The representative character of the Bahá’í community should therefore be reinforced through the attraction, conversion and support of an ever-growing number of new believers from the diverse elements constituting the population of that vast mainland and particularly from among **Indians and Eskimos about whose future the Master wrote in such glowing terms.** In the glorious freedom which enables you to proclaim, to teach and confirm, to educate and deepen

yourselves and others in the verities of the Faith, you have precious opportunities of service denied to many of your fellow believers elsewhere. If your blessed communities are to lead the world spiritually, as the Master envisaged, then the Faith must strike deeper roots in your hearts, the spirit of its teachings must be exemplified in ever greater measure in your lives, and God's Holy Cause must be taught and proclaimed with ever greater intensity. In His immortal Tablets addressed to the Bahá'ís of North America 'Abdu'l-Bahá assures each one of you that "whosoever arises in this day to diffuse the divine fragrances, the cohorts of the Kingdom of God shall confirm him ..."

You are met in this Conference to review the progress of the [Seven Year Plan](#), to be confirmed, galvanized and sent into action. It is not enough for the North American believers to stand at the forefront of the Bahá'í world; the scope of their exertions must be steadily widened. In the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "The range of your future achievements still remains undisclosed. I fervently hope that in the near future the whole earth may be stirred and shaken by the results of your achievements." "Exert yourselves; your mission is unspeakably glorious. Should success crown your enterprise, America will assuredly evolve into a centre from which waves of spiritual power will emanate ..." The valiant countries of North America should in the second half of the [Seven Year Plan](#) ensure that an ever-swelling number of pioneers and traveling teachers will arise and travel to and settle in countries which need their support, however inhospitable the local conditions may be, ceaselessly endeavoring to contribute to the expansion of the teaching work and the strengthening of the foundations of the communities they are called upon to assist. They should, moreover, continue their defence of the downtrodden, open their doors to their Bahá'í brethren who are seeking refuge in their lands, provide technological expertise to communities which need it, and supply an uninterrupted flow of resources to support the ever-increasing international projects of the Faith.

In their respective homefronts the Bahá'ís of North America should intensify the drive to [attract the masses to God's Holy Cause](#), to provide the means for their integration into the work of the Faith, and should become standard-bearers of an embryonic Bahá'í society which is destined to gradually emerge under the influence of the integrating and civilizing forces emanating from the Source of God's Revelation. Such noble objectives cannot be fully achieved unless and until local communities become those collective centers of unity ordained in our Writings, and every individual earnestly strives to support the structure and ensure the stability of the [Administrative Edifice](#) of the Faith.

How fitting that this Conference, and the one held for Bahá'í children on a scale unprecedented in North America, should commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of

[Bahíyyih Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf](#), whose love for the North American believers and whose admiration for their heroism were so deep and so sustained and whose natural fondness for children was so characteristic of Bahá'u'lláh. May each of you emulate her unswerving devotion and loyalty to the Covenant of God and her perseverance in the path of His love. We shall mark the first day of your Conference, together with the one being held concurrently in Canberra, with prayers at the Holy Shrines that all may "be assisted in ... service and, like unto brilliant stars, shine in these regions with the light of ... guidance."

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

[signed: The Universal House of Justice]



Comments

September 2. On this date in 1992, Shirin Fozdar died. Born to Zoroastrian parents who had converted to the Bahá'í Faith in Bombay, along with her husband, they were the first Bahá'í pioneers to Singapore. She was an inaugural member of the National Spiritual Assembly of South East Asia.

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

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[Shirin Fozdar](#) was born on March 1, 1905 to Persian Zoroastrian parents who had converted to the Bahá'í Faith in Bombay. The family went on a Bahá'í Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1906 when she was eleven months old, and Shirin took her first steps holding onto 'Abdu'l-Bahá's cloak. The family made a second Pilgrimage in 1911, and Shirin first met Shoghi Effendi. In 1922 she gave a talk on universal education at the Indian Bahá'í National Convention in Karachi.

In 1925 Shirin married [Khodadad Fozdar](#), a medical doctor, and he became a Bahá'í soon after their marriage. The Fozdars had three sons, [Jamshed](#), John, and Minoo, and two daughters. [Jamshed](#) was an early pioneer to Sarawak and became the most important Bahá'í writer on the Bahá'í fulfilment of Buddhist prophecies. [John](#) became a [Knight of Bahá'u'lláh](#) for Brunei in 1954.

In 1931 she was elected to the Executive Committee of the All-Asian Women's Conference, a non-Bahá'í group, and in 1934 she was a representative of the Asian Women's Confer-

ence at the League of Nations. Shirin met Shoghi Effendi again when she went on Pilgrimage a third time with Khodadad in 1935, and Shoghi Effendi assured them that they were protected by God.

In January 1938 Shirin and Khodadad visited Colombo, Sri Lanka, with Martha Root for ten days. The Fozdars spoke at a local Parsi club. Shirin then accompanied Martha to Mysore and Bangalore. Shirin also visited Burma in the 1930's, and Khodadad's position as Medical Officer of a Railway Company allowed her to travel across India to give talks on the faith and women's rights.

In 1941 Mahatma Gandhi asked Shirin to visit Ahmedabad on his behalf to speak on unity in response to Hindu Muslim tensions in the city. Her work towards women's rights in the 1940's was acknowledged by both Gandhi and Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

In 1950 Khodadad resigned from his job and the Fozdars pioneered to Singapore. They gave talks on the Faith, and Shirin was able to give talks to notable local women's organisations. In 1952 Shirin founded the Singapore Council of Women with 2000 members, and she was appointed as the group's Secretary-General. The group's efforts helped lead to the establishment of the Singapore Women's Charter in 1961. In late 1952 she visited Australia and New Zealand for several months to undertake a teaching tour.

In December 1953 [Yankee Leong](#) helped Shirin arrange talks on the Faith in Malacca, Seremban and Kuala Lumpur. He declared during this teaching tour making him the first Bahá'í of Malaya (now Malaysia). In 1953 Khodad became a [Knight of Bahá'u'lláh](#) for the Andaman Islands. In 1954 she visited Saigon, Vietnam, and became the first Bahá'í to visit French Indochina. She also visited Phnom Penh in Cambodia where she was presented with the country's first medal for being a Champion of Women's Rights.

In 1957 both Shirin and her husband were elected to the first National Spiritual Assembly of South East Asia at the first South East Asia Convention held in Djakarta, Indonesia. Khodadad died the following year, a few days before the second South East Asia Convention. In 1958 she was part of a Singapore Delegation to the Afro-Asian Women's Conference in Colombo, and she was invited to China by the All China Federation of Women in 1959. She was invited to give talks relating to women's rights in the United States by the U.S. State Department after her visit to China.

In 1961 Shirin pioneered to teach the Bahá'í Faith in Bangkok, Thailand, and met with King Bhumibol Adulyadej. She established Santitham Vittayakom School in northeast Thailand. She moved back to Singapore in 1971, and in 1988 she received an award from the Singa-

pore Council of Womens Organisations acknowledging her contribution to the women's movement. She returned to India at some point, where she suffered a heart attack in Bombay, after which she returned to Singapore where she died on September 2, 1992 due to cancer.



Comments

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[Sources that allege Nabíl-i-A'zam](#) was murdered base their claim on the allegation that he became a victim due to his support of [Mírzá Muhammad `Alí](#) in his conflict with 'Abdu'l-Bahá...

According to [the memoirs of Baha's son Mirza Badiullah](#) surnamed the [Most Luminous Branch](#) (غصن انور) by Baha: One year after Baha's death, Nabil visited Badiullah in Haifa. He was distressed. Nabil said to Badiullah: "I can no longer stay at Acre. The situation there has deteriorated. By dint of violence, abusive language and cursing, one has to act against his own faith, has to regard and hold the [Most Mighty Branch](#) [[Ghusn-i Azam](#), i.e. [Abdul Baha Abbas](#)] superior in station to the [Blessed Beauty](#) [[Janab-i Mubarak](#), i.e. Baha] has to write corrupted [versions of] all the holy writings and epistles, and has to vilify and excommunicate [Baha's] sons, [Baha's] words and [Baha's] family [i.e. all the members of [Baha's household](#) in opposition to [Abdul Baha Abbas](#)], failing which one is branded as [covenant-breaker](#) [Naqiz] or Vacillator [[Mutezalzil](#), i.e. opposed to [Abdul Baha Abbas](#) and par-

tisan of [Muhammad Ali](#)] and becomes the object of untold calumnies and falsehoods.” [Nabil](#) requested [Badiullah](#) to find him a suitable room at the foot of Mount Carmel. He went back to Acre to fetch his things. Nothing was heard of him for sometime. Later “limbs of his body and his clothing” were discovered near the sea shores at Acre. These were collated together and buried. [Abdul Baha Abbas](#) “shed crocodile tears” during the burial service of [Nabil](#), “although he was exceedingly annoyed with him.”

From the *Encyclopædia Iranica* article titled "[NABIL-E A'ZAM ZARANDI, MOLLĀ MOḤAMMAD](#)"...

NABIL-E A'ZAM ZARANDI, MOLLĀ MOḤAMMAD (ملا محمد نبیل اعظم زرندي), Persian Bahai poet, teacher, and chronicler of Babi history (b. Zarand, 18 Şafar 1247/29 July 1831; d. 'Akkā, Palestine, 10 Şafar 1310/3 September 1892).

Nabil converted to Babism around 1847 and in 1858 accepted the faith of Bahā'-Allāh. Born into a humble family in Zarand, he received traditional education in his childhood and worked as a shepherd in his youth, when he converted to Babism (Zarandi, p. 434). Later in his life, he studied the writings of the Bāb and became well versed in both Islamic and Bahai literature.

During his years as a Babi, Nabil traveled to Lorestan, Kermanshah, Tehran, and Khorasan; he met with the Babis and Babi leaders in those provinces to foster the Babi ideology and inspire the believers to arise, consolidate, and expand the new Babi communities. He also transcribed and distributed Babi literature among the rank and file of the society to promote the Babi faith. He was jailed in Sāva for four months because of his pro-Babi activities. In September 1854, he set out for Baghdad and Karbala, where he stayed until October 1856. During late 1856 to July 1858, he traveled to Hamadan, his hometown Zarand, and many major Babi communities in the capital province and returned to Baghdad on 19 July 1858 (Rafati, pp. 30-31).

Nabil was one of the Babi leaders who claimed to be the promised messianic figure according to the Bāb's prophecies, but he withdrew his claim when he recognized Bahā'-Allāh's status as the fulfillment of the Bāb's predictions and the leader of the Babis (Taherzadeh, p. 202). Nabil became one of Bahā'-Allāh's earliest followers, in 1858 in Baghdad.

Nabil's life as a Bahai is summed up in his extensive travels throughout Iran, Iraq, Turkey, the Caucasus, Egypt, and Palestine. In his early travels as a Bahai, he met with the Babi

communities to invite them to the Bahai faith; he attracted the Babi leaders to the recognition of Bahā'-Allāh as the fulfillment of the Bāb's prophecies concerning the promised messianic figure and helped reinforce the belief of the new Bahais in the teachings and principles that were being advanced by Bahā'-Allāh. Through these activities, Nabil turned into an outstanding teacher, defender, and promulgator of the Bahai faith.

While Nabil was in Khorasan in spring 1866, at his suggestion, the greeting *Allāho abhā* (God is the most glorious) was adopted by the followers of Bahā'-Allāh, replacing the old salutation of *Allāho Akbar* (God is the greatest), which was common among the Babis (Shoghi Effendi, p. 176). This was a significant action that gave group identity to the Bahais and was a sign of their independence from the Babis and the Azalis, a Bābi faction that considered Mirzā Yahyā Ṣobḥ-e Azal (d. 1912) as the legitimate successor to the Bāb.

Nabil was the first Bahai to perform pilgrimage (*hajj*) to the house of the Bāb in Shiraz in fall 1866, in accordance with the rites prescribed in the *Surat al-hajj* revealed by Bahā'-Allāh. He also went to Baghdad and performed the pilgrimage to the House of Bahā'-Allāh in spring 1867, according to another sura written by Bahā'-Allāh for that purpose (Rafati, p. 36). Nabil's pilgrimage to those two houses marked the inception of pilgrimage laws ordained by Bahā'-Allāh later in his Ketāb-e aqdas (Shoghi Effendi, pp. 176-77).

Another historic mission undertaken by Nabil under Bahā'-Allāh's instruction was his travel to Egypt to appeal to the officials for the release of several Bahais who had been imprisoned in Cairo at the instigation of their enemies (Shoghi Effendi, p. 178). Nabil's mission resulted in his own imprisonment for two months in Cairo in spring 1868 and then in the Alexandria jail for a few more months. After being released, Nabil traveled to Cyprus and Beirut, and then he joined Bahā'-Allāh's exiled community in Acre ('Akkā) in late October 1869. He spent much of the last two decades of his life in Acre and its surrounding areas.

After the passing of Bahā'-Allāh in 1892, Nabil was chosen by 'Abd-al-Bahā' to prepare a text for recitation in his tomb (Shoghi Effendi, p. 222). Nabil selected four passages from Bahā'-Allāh's own works and composed the text, which is known as the *Ziārat-nāma* ('*Andalib* 18/71, summer 1999, pp. 19-20). The impact of the passing of Bahā'-Allāh on Nabil was so great and inconsolable that he drowned himself in the sea at Acre circa 10 Ṣafar 1310/3 September 1892. He is buried in the Acre cemetery.

Nabil was the recipient of a number of Bahā'-Allāh's best-known works, including *Surat al-dam* (1866), *Surat al-hajj*, for the house of the Bāb in Shiraz (1866), and *Surat al-hajj*, for the house of Bahā'-Allāh in Baghdad (1867).

When Shoghi Effendi (d. 1957) designated nineteen prominent early Bahais as the "Apostles [Ḥawāriyun] of Bahā'-Allāh," Nabil was one of them (*The Bahá'í World* III, pp. 80-81). The title signifies the recognition of distinguished services that those nineteen loyal and devoted Persian Bahais have rendered to their faith.

Nabil's works are in poetry and prose. He was a gifted, prolific poet, who devoted most of his poetry to the historical events in the Babi and Bahai faiths. His most famous poem in couplet form (*maṭnawī*) about the history of the Bahai faith was published as *Maṭnawī-e Nabil Zarandi* in Cairo in 1924 in 65 pages and reprinted in Langenhain in 1995. In this *maṭnawī* he describes major historical events from the early days of the Babi movement to the year 1869. His second *maṭnawī*, in 666 verses, deals with Bahā'-Allāh's banishment from Edirne to Acre. Other historical poetry of Nabil consists of his *maṭnawī* titled "Maṭnawī-e weṣāl wa hejr" in 175 verses (pub. in Rafati, 2014, Chap. 6; *Ḍokā'i*, p. 416) and his *maṭnawī* on the life of Āqā Moḥammad Nabil Akbar Qā'eni in 303 verses (*Kuṣṣahā-i az ḵarman-e adab wa honar* 13, pp. 108-16). In addition to those *maṭnawīs*, Nabil left behind a great collection of poetry in different forms, only a fraction of which has been published.

Nabil's works in prose include a treatise on the Babi-Bahai calendar, a treatise on Bahai inheritance laws (Fāẓel Māzandarāni, IV pp. 1, 214), and his account on the event of the passing of Bahā'-Allāh (Nabil Zarandi, *Maṭnawī-e Nabil Zarandi*, Langenhain, 1995, pp. 67-108). But Nabil's most celebrated work is *Maṭāle' al-anwār*, an extensive historical narrative of the Babi faith, written in Acre in 1888-90, which was edited and translated into English by Shoghi Effendi as *The Dawn-Breakers*. The work was first published in the United States in 1932.

Maṭāle' al-anwār, the most authentic and the main primary source on the early history of the Babi movement in Iran, is regarded by the Bahais as the definitive account of the Bāb's dispensation. The work has been translated into many languages, and it has played a major role in familiarizing the Bahais around the world with the historical background of their faith and helping them understand its link to the socio-religious climate of the Persian society in the early days of its development. The original Persian manuscript of *Maṭāle' al-anwār*, preserved at the International Bahai Archives in Haifa, comprises 1,014 pages of 22-24 lines.

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(Vahid Rafati)

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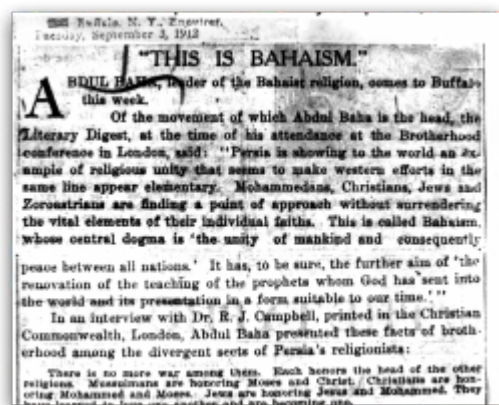


Comments

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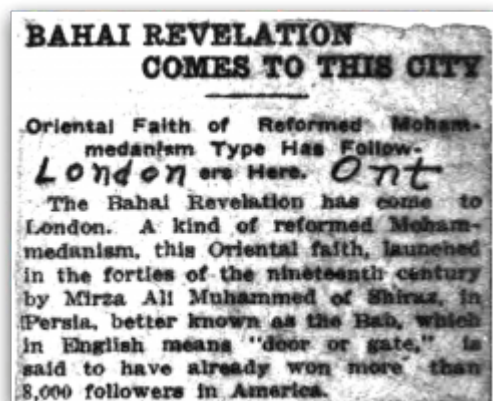


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September 3. On this date in 2003, [The Times](#) carried an article titled "[Faith, peace and tolerance in Monterey](#)". An authority on biological warfare employed by the British Ministry of Defence, and formerly a weapons inspector with the [United Nations Special Commission](#) in Iraq, David Kelly was a prime source for the false information of Iraq's purported possession of weapons of mass destruction in the lead-up to the [invasion of Iraq in 2003](#).

On September 25, 1999, David Kelly converted to the Bahá'í Faith at the [Bosch Bahá'í School](#) in California. David Kelly was a prime source for the false information of Iraq's purported possession of weapons of mass destruction in the lead-up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

On July 17, 2003, [David Kelly](#) was found dead from an apparent suicide, two days after appearing before a parliamentary [Foreign Affairs Select Committee](#). An authority on biological warfare employed by the British Ministry of Defence, and formerly a weapons inspector with the [United Nations Special Commission](#) in Iraq, David Kelly was a prime source for the false information of Iraq's purported possession of weapons of mass destruction in the lead-up to the [invasion of Iraq in 2003](#).

On August 11, 2003, the Independent carried [an article](#) about David Kelly, noting "In October 2002, [Dr Kelly](#) gave a slide show and lecture about his experiences as a weapons

inspector in Iraq to a small almost private gathering of the Baha'i faith, which aims to unite the teachings of all the prophets. [Dr Kelly](#) had converted to the religion three years earlier, while in New York on attachment to the UN. When he returned to England he became treasurer of the small but influential Baha'i branch in Abingdon near his home. [Roger Kingdon](#), a member, recalls: 'He had no doubt that [the Iraqis] had biological and chemical weapons. It was clear that David Kelly was largely happy with the material in the dossier.'

From [The Times](#) article titled "[Faith, peace and tolerance in Monterey](#)", dated September 3, 2003.

September 3

[Faith, peace and tolerance in Monterey](#)

By Chris Ayres and James Bone

Four years ago David Kelly made a personal odyssey to the Californian resort of Monterey. He was there, not to visit its military installations or its tourist boutiques but to convert to the Baha'i faith

IT WOULD SEEM an unlikely place to find peace for the soul. Monterey, an affluent city on California's central coast, about an hour's flight north from Los Angeles, is known more for its proximity to military installations and its role as retirement city of choice for generals and one-time spies than for any sense of spirituality. But it was to this beautiful seaside resort, often shrouded in mist because of the hot air from the Californian deserts hitting the cold Pacific, that David Kelly came four years ago to make a declaration of faith to the Baha'i religion.

On September 25, 1999, he would have turned his back on the postcard landscape of sand dunes and gleaming ocean that marks California's Pacific Coast Highway, and taken the incongruously named Bonny Doon Road up through the towns of Loch Lomond and Bracken Brae, until he came to the first signpost to the [Bosch Baha'i School](#), one of only four such establishments in the United States and an inspiration for the British scientist and biological weapons expert. He was possibly accompanied by his friend and spiritual mentor [Mai Pederson](#), the American woman thought to be responsible for introducing him to the Baha'i faith.

Monterey, with its proximity to the Defence Language Institute and other military installations, was a natural destination for Dr Kelly; the Monterey Institute of International Studies, which has its own Centre for Nonproliferation Studies, the largest non-governmental or-

organisation in the world devoted to curbing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, would have been an essential place for him to visit. The centre is thought to have one of the largest databases of information on Saddam Hussein's regime in the world. The city itself, an old fishing town turned into a tourist mecca, with chi-chi boutiques and restaurants that line the seafront — a kind of Covent Garden-on-sea — is similar to other California coastal towns such as Carmel and Santa Barbara that look out over the rolling surf of the Pacific. But it is thought that Dr Kelly visited Monterey not for the expertise offered by the city's scientists, but for the consolation of the soul that he would find in the Baha'i school high above the city, overlooking the California coastline.

After reaching the series of wooden cabins that make up the school's campus — passing, first, the four garden gnomes, dressed in 19th-century peasant outfits, that wave cheerfully to those curious or devoted enough to go further — he made his simple declaration of faith. According to [Joanne McClure](#), a youthful 66-year-old who pays \$65 (£41) a night for room and board at the school, to an untrained eye this would have seemed an almost casual affair, the kind of non-ritual ritual beloved of the Baha'is, who pride themselves on having no formal initiation ceremony, sacrament or clergy. "First we would make sure initiates know who Baha'ullah is — the founder of the faith — and that they really knew what they were doing," says McClure. "Then they would sign a card saying that there are certain laws they need to obey." These include abstaining from drink, drugs and gambling; supporting the institution of marriage; believing that God created the universe; and encouraging the end of racial, class, and religious prejudices. After Dr Kelly had signed the card, it would have been sent to the Baha'i national headquarters in Wilmette, Illinois, where the new believer would be put on the mailing list for the American magazine *The Baha'is*. From then on, Dr Kelly would have been encouraged to attend feasts held every 19 days, which involve prayer-chants, administrative discussions with local spiritual assemblies, and general socialising.

Dr Kelly would have been attracted to the peacefulness and tolerance of the Baha'is, who believe that all religions are essentially valid. As [McClure](#) says: "I could never understand why God was going to send all these people to Hell just because they didn't believe in the same things." As a scientist, perhaps seeking spiritual succour within an intellectual framework, he would also have been attracted to the faith's openness to modernity and its lack of fundamentalist dogma.

Throughout 1999 Dr Kelly travelled to New York for six or seven two-week trips to work with fellow experts at UN headquarters, and he visited at least twice more for the regular six-monthly meetings of the UN Special Commission's (UNSCOM's) college of commis-

sioners. During this year, he often appeared at Baha'i meetings on the other side of the continent in Monterey, at the group's traditional 19th-day feasts. Pederson, who was studying at the Defence Language Institute, a heavily guarded military facility that taught American soldiers how to speak Japanese during the Second World War, was also at the feasts. The two had met and become friends when she served under the scientist on a UN mission to Iraq in 1998, the last inspection before the withdrawal of UN inspectors.

John VonBerg, whose wife was the secretary of the local Baha'is' spiritual assembly at the time, says: "He has been to my home several times. We had special events on holy days, representing various things. His principles were so close to those of the Baha'i faith."

The last time Dr Kelly visited, VonBerg remembers the Baha'i group going to gaze out over the bay.

[Noreen Steinmetz](#), a friend of Dr Kelly and [Pederson](#), recalls: "He would pass through here every once in a while and we would have the opportunity to sit down with him and go on hikes and chat. I met him through [Mai Pederson](#)." She adds that Dr Kelly always arrived at meetings by himself, and other Baha'is assumed that he was working at the nearby Monterey Institute, where several of his UN colleagues worked. But scientist friends at the centre say he never visited them there.

A glance around the [Bosch Baha'i School's](#) bookshop reveals some possible sources of tension for Dr Kelly. Several tomes focus on the divine importance of the UN, which was eventually ignored by the United States and Britain after it refused to support a military campaign to remove the Iraqi regime.

With that in mind, it is hard to see how Dr Kelly could ever have supported an Iraq war without UN approval.

Even more ominous, however, is a tract entitled [Political Non-Involvement and Obedience to Government](#), compiled by [Peter J. Khan](#). The book spells out the Baha'is' belief that they should not become involved in any form of politics, because politics can create divisions that could destroy the Baha'i community.

As part of this argument, Baha'is believe that they should support their government, whether just or unjust (there are, however, exceptions). On page 28, [Khan](#) poses a question that Dr Kelly himself could have asked: What should we do when controversies arise as a result of government policies?

The answer, provided by the Guardian of the Baha'i faith, the late Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, is this: "In such controversies they should assign no blame, take no side, further no design, and identify themselves with no system prejudicial to the best interests of that worldwide fellowship which it is their aim to guard and foster."

[Khan's](#) book makes it clear that any Baha'i who does not follow this advice is ultimately weakening the Baha'i religion. Given this official position from the Guardian, it is not hard to imagine Dr Kelly's horror when he was named as the alleged source of a story blaming Britain's decision to go to war on a press secretary who "sexed up" intelligence reports.

But would the Guardian have condoned suicide? "Let's just say," says Mrs VonBerg, "that it would not follow the teachings of the Baha'i faith."

On January 27, 2004, three medical experts wrote [The Guardian](#) newspaper [a letter](#) stating that it is highly improbable that the primary cause of [Dr. Kelly](#)'s death was hemorrhage from transection of a single ulnar artery, as stated by [Brian Hutton in his report](#).

[Our doubts about Dr Kelly's suicide](#)

As specialist medical professionals, we do not consider the evidence given at the Hutton inquiry has demonstrated that Dr David Kelly committed suicide.

Dr Nicholas Hunt, the forensic pathologist at the Hutton inquiry, concluded that Dr Kelly bled to death from a self-inflicted wound to his left wrist. We view this as highly improbable. Arteries in the wrist are of matchstick thickness and severing them does not lead to life-threatening blood loss. Dr Hunt stated that the only artery that had been cut - the ulnar artery - had been completely transected. Complete transection causes the artery to quickly retract and close down, and this promotes clotting of the blood.

The ambulance team reported that the quantity of blood at the scene was minimal and surprisingly small. It is extremely difficult to lose significant amounts of blood at a pressure below 50-60 systolic in a subject who is compensating by vasoconstricting. To have died from haemorrhage, Dr Kelly would have had to lose about five pints of blood - it is unlikely that he would have lost more than a pint.

Alexander Allan, the forensic toxicologist at the inquiry, considered the amount ingested of Co-Proxamol insufficient to have caused death. Allan could not show that Dr Kelly had ingested the 29 tablets said to be missing from the packets found. Only a fifth of one tablet was found in his stomach. Although levels of Co-Proxamol in the blood were higher

than therapeutic levels, Allan conceded that the blood level of each of the drug's two components was less than a third of what would normally be found in a fatal overdose.

We dispute that Dr Kelly could have died from haemorrhage or from Co-Proxamol ingestion or from both. The coroner, Nicholas Gardiner, has spoken recently of resuming the inquest into his death. If it re-opens, as in our opinion it should, a clear need exists to scrutinise more closely Dr Hunt's conclusions as to the cause of death.

David Halpin

Specialist in trauma and orthopaedic surgery **C Stephen Frost**

Specialist in diagnostic radiology **Searle Sennett**

Specialist in anaesthesiology rowenathursby@onetel.net.uk

Follow-up [letter](#) on February 11, 2004...

[Medical evidence does not support suicide by Kelly](#)

Since three of us wrote our letter to [the Guardian](#) on [January 27](#), questioning whether [Dr Kelly](#)'s death was suicide, we have received professional support for our view from vascular surgeon Martin Birnstingl, pathologist Dr Peter Fletcher, and consultant in public health Dr Andrew Rouse. We all agree that it is highly improbable that the primary cause of Dr Kelly's death was haemorrhage from transection of a single ulnar artery, as stated by [Brian Hutton in his report](#). On February 10, Dr Rouse wrote to the BMJ explaining that he and his colleague, Yaser Adi, had spent 100 hours preparing a report, Hutton, Kelly and the Missing Epidemiology. They concluded that "the identified evidence does not support the view that wrist-slash deaths are common (or indeed possible)". While Professor Chris Milroy, in a letter to the BMJ, responded, "unlikely does not make it impossible", Dr Rouse replied: "Before most of us will be prepared to accept wristslashing ... as a satisfactory and credible explanation for a death, we will also require evidence that such aetiologies are likely; not merely 'possible'."

Our criticism of the [Hutton report](#) is that its verdict of "suicide" is an inappropriate finding. To bleed to death from a transected artery goes against classical medical teaching, which is that a transected artery retracts, narrows, clots and stops bleeding within minutes. Even if a person continues to bleed, the body compensates for the loss of blood through vasoconstriction (closing down of non-essential arteries). This allows a partially exsanguinated individual to live for many hours, even days.

Professor Milroy expands on the finding of Dr Nicholas Hunt, the forensic pathologist at the Hutton inquiry - that haemorrhage was the main cause of death (possibly finding it inadequate) - and falls back on the toxicology: "The toxicology showed a significant overdose of co-proxamol. The standard text, Baselt, records deaths with concentrations at 1 mg/l, the concentration found in Kelly." But Dr Allan, the toxicologist in the case, considered this nowhere near toxic. Each of the two components was a third of what is normally considered a fatal level. Professor Milroy then talks of "ischaemic heart disease". But Dr Hunt is explicit that Dr Kelly did not suffer a heart attack. Thus, one must assume that no changes attributable to myocardial ischaemia were actually found at autopsy.

We believe the verdict given is in contradiction to medical teaching; is at variance with documented cases of wrist-slash suicides; and does not align itself with the evidence presented at the inquiry. We call for the reopening of the inquest by the coroner, where a jury may be called and evidence taken on oath.

Andrew Rouse

Public health consultant

Searle Sennett

Specialist in anaesthesiology

David Halpin

Specialist in trauma

Stephen Frost

Specialist in radiology

Dr Peter Fletcher

Specialist in pathology

Martin Birnstingl

Specialist in vascular surgery



Comments

September 4. On this date in 1981, the UHJ wrote the NSA of the US that believers do not need "copyright clearance before they may quote from the Sacred Texts" but there remains "the existing requirements for individual believers to submit their works on the Faith for review before publication."

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

September 4. On this date in 1981, [a letter](#) written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States clarified "that the Spiritual Assemblies and individual believers are free to quote in their publications from any of the Writings of the three Central Figures of the Faith or from the writings of the beloved Guardian, whether in the original language or in translation, without obtaining clearance from the copyright holder... it does not change the existing requirements for individual believers to submit their works on the Faith for [review before publication](#), neither does it relieve Spiritual Assemblies of their responsibility to protect the dignity of the Faith and uphold the proper standard of reverence in the use of its Sacred Scriptures

[363. Copyright Clearance on Sacred Writings Not Necessary for Assemblies and Bahá'í Believers](#)

"The Universal House of Justice has been concerned of late to note an apparently growing impression among Spiritual Assemblies and individual believers in many parts of the world, that they must obtain copyright clearance before they may quote from the Sacred Texts of the Faith in any publication. It has now instructed us to make it clear that the **Spiritual Assemblies and individual believers are free to quote in their publications from any of the Writings of the three Central Figures of the Faith or from the writings of the**

beloved Guardian, whether in the original language or in translation, without obtaining clearance from the copyright holder, unless the copyright holder in the case of a translation is an individual or is a non-Bahá'í institution. It is recognized that this ruling may endanger copyrights, but we feel that this is a risk that must be taken.

"The ruling is made to ensure that the Sacred Scriptures of our Faith and the writings of the beloved Guardian may be freely used by the believers; **it does not change the existing requirements for individual believers to submit their works on the Faith for review before publication,** neither does it relieve Spiritual Assemblies of their responsibility to protect the dignity of the Faith and uphold the proper standard of reverence in the use of its Sacred Scriptures. Thus, if any Assembly sees that one of the friends is making use of any of the Holy Texts in an unbecoming manner, it should remonstrate with him and, if necessary, require him to stop doing so."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, September 4, 1981)



Comments

September 4. On this date in 1982, the UHJ wrote an NSA reminding that "In the 'Kitab-i-Aqdas' Bahá'u'lláh has stated: 'It is incumbent upon everyone to write his testament.'" When Shoghi Effendi died in London at the age of 60, he did not have a will.

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

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[630. Every Bahá'í is Encouraged to Make a Will and Testament](#)

"In the '[Kitab-i-Aqdas](#)' Bahá'u'lláh has stated: 'It is incumbent upon everyone to write his testament. It behooveth him to adorn its heading with the Most Great Name, to testify therein to the oneness of God as manifested in the Day-Spring of His revelation and to set forth such good deeds as he may wish to be realized, that these may stand as his testimony in the worlds of Revelation and of Creation and be as a treasure stored up with his Lord, the Protector, the Trusted One.'"

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to a National Spiritual Assembly, September 4, 1982)

Shoghi Effendi died having violated Bahá'u'lláh's command in the [Kitáb-i-Aqdas](#) that "[Unto everyone hath been enjoined the writing of a will.](#)" Having no children of his own and having declared every living male descendant of Bahá'u'lláh a Covenant-breaker, Shoghi Effendi left no eligible candidates for the office of Guardian, posing a serious problem

given his assertion that "In this Dispensation, divine guidance flows on to us in this world after the Prophet's ascension, through first the Master, and then the Guardians." He had furthermore stated in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* that

Divorced from the institution of the Guardianship the *World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* would be mutilated and permanently deprived of that hereditary principle which, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá has written, has been invariably upheld by the Law of God. "In all the Divine Dispensations," He states, in a Tablet addressed to a follower of the Faith in Persia, "the eldest son hath been given extraordinary distinctions. Even the station of prophethood hath been his birthright." Without such an institution the integrity of the Faith would be imperiled, and the stability of the entire fabric would be gravely endangered. Its prestige would suffer, the means required to enable it to take a long, an uninterrupted view over a series of generations would be completely lacking, and the necessary guidance to define the sphere of the legislative action of its elected representatives would be totally withdrawn.

It is worth reading and reflecting on how *Shoghi Effendi describes* in *God Passes By* the misfortunes, illnesses, and deaths of those individuals he had declared Covenant-breakers...

Mohammad Ali Bahai's brother, *Mírzá Dīya'u'lláh*, died prematurely; *Mírzá Áqá Ján*, his dupe, followed that same brother, three years later, to the grave; and *Mírzá Badí'u'lláh*, his chief accomplice, betrayed his cause, published a signed denunciation of his evil acts, but rejoined him again, only to be alienated from him in consequence of the scandalous behavior of his own daughter. *Mírzá Muḥammad-'Alí's* half-sister, *Furúghíyyih*, died of cancer, whilst her husband, *Siyyid 'Alí*, passed away from a heart attack before his sons could reach him, the eldest being subsequently stricken in the prime of life, by the same malady. *Muḥammad-Javád-i-Qazvíní*, a notorious Covenant-breaker, perished miserably. *Shu'á'u'lláh* who, as witnessed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His Will, had counted on the murder of the Center of the Covenant, and who had been despatched to the United States by his father to join forces with *Ibráhím Khayru'lláh*, returned crestfallen and empty-handed from his inglorious mission. *Jamál-i-Burújirdí*, *Mírzá Muḥammad-'Alí's* ablest lieutenant in Persia, fell a prey to a fatal and loathsome disease; *Siyyid Mihdíy-i-Dahájí*, who, betraying 'Abdu'l-Bahá, joined the Covenant-breakers, died in obscurity and poverty, followed by his wife and his two sons; *Mírzá Ḥusayn-'Alíy-i-Jahrúmí*, *Mírzá Ḥusayn-i-Shírázíy-i-Khurṭúmí* and *Hájí Muḥammad-Ḥusayn-i-Káshání*, who represented the arch-breaker of the Covenant in Persia, India and Egypt, failed utterly in their missions; whilst the greedy and conceited *Ibráhím-i-Khayru'lláh*, who had chosen to uphold the banner of his rebellion in America for no less than twenty years, and who had the temerity to denounce, in writing, 'Abdu'l-Bahá,

His "false teachings, His misrepresentations of Bahaism, His dissimulation," and to stigmatize His visit to America as "a death-blow" to the "Cause of God," met his death soon after he had uttered these denunciations, utterly abandoned and despised by the entire body of the members of a community, whose founders he himself had converted to the Faith, and in the very land that bore witness to the multiplying evidences of the established ascendancy of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Whose authority he had, in his later years, vowed to uproot.

As to those who had openly espoused the cause of this arch-breaker of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant [Mohammad Ali Bahai](#), or who had secretly sympathized with him, whilst outwardly supporting 'Abdu'l-Bahá, some eventually repented and were forgiven; others became disillusioned and lost their faith entirely; a few apostatized, whilst the rest dwindled away, leaving him in the end, except for a handful of his relatives, alone and unsupported. Surviving 'Abdu'l-Bahá by almost twenty years, he who had so audaciously affirmed to His face that he had no assurance he might outlive Him, lived long enough to witness the utter bankruptcy of his cause, leading meanwhile a wretched existence within the walls of a Mansion that had once housed a crowd of his supporters; was denied by the civil authorities, as a result of the crisis he had after 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing foolishly precipitated, the official custody of his Father's Tomb; was compelled, a few years later, to vacate that same Mansion, which, through his flagrant neglect, had fallen into a dilapidated condition; was stricken with paralysis which crippled half his body; lay bedridden in pain for months before he died; and was buried according to Muslim rites, in the immediate vicinity of a local Muslim shrine, his grave remaining until the present day devoid of even a tombstone—a pitiful reminder of the hollowness of the claims he had advanced, of the depths of infamy to which he had sunk, and of the severity of the retribution his acts had so richly merited.

It should be noted, that because Bahá'í law forbids the "[transport the body of the deceased a greater distance than one hour's journey from the city](#)", Shoghi Effendi was buried at the [New Southgate Cemetery](#) in London, far from the Bahá'í holy shrines in Israel. Not far from his grave in Southgate, however, rests Shoghi Effendi's niece [Maliheh Afnan](#), the artist daughter of [Ruhangiz Afnan](#), who Shoghi Effendi had declared a Covenant-breaker for marrying the son of [Siyyid Ali Afnan](#), who 'Abdu'l-Bahá had declared a Covenant-breaker.



Comments

September 4. On this date in 1984, an individual wrote the UHJ seeking "further clarification about the qualitative difference between the Guardian's prerogative of interpretation and the power of elucidation of the Universal House of Justice."

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

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The Universal House of Justice Department of the Secretariat 25 October 1984

[To an individual]

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The Universal House of Justice has received **your letter dated 4 September 1984 in which you seek further clarification about the qualitative difference between the Guardian's prerogative of interpretation and the power of elucidation of the Universal House of Justice, and raise questions about other aspects of the Teachings.** We are directed to convey the following comments.

As you are aware, the Universal House of Justice has written three major messages which explain, among other things, the duties and functions shared by the Guardian and the Universal House of Justice, and those functions that are unique to each specific Institution. These messages are published in *Wellspring of Guidance*, [pp. 44–56](#), and [pp. 81–91](#), and in *Messages of the Universal House of Justice: 1968–1973*, [pp. 37–44](#). In relation to their specific functions, Shoghi Effendi explained that **"it is made indubitably clear and evident**

that the Guardian of the Faith has been made the Interpreter of the Word and that the Universal House of Justice has been invested with the function of legislating in matters not expressly revealed in the teachings."

The use of the term "elucidation" by the Universal House of Justice and the process by which it is implemented are based on passages in the [Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá](#) and statements in the writings of the Guardian. For example, in the [Will and Testament](#), 'Abdu'l-Bahá states:

It is incumbent upon these members (of the Universal House of Justice) to ... deliberate upon all problems which have caused difference, questions that are obscure and matters that are not expressly recorded in the Book . . . and bear upon daily transactions, . . . (p. 20)

Further, in response to a question raised by the American National Spiritual Assembly about the Universal Court of Arbitration, the Guardian in [a letter dated 9 April 1923](#), defined such explanation as being in the domain of the Universal House of Justice and anticipated its function of elucidation:

... regarding the nature and scope of the Universal Court of Arbitration, this and other similar matters will have to be explained and elucidated by the Universal House of Justice, to which, according to the Master's explicit Instructions, all important fundamental questions must be referred.... (*Bahá'í Administration*, p. 47)

In [a letter dated 9 March 1965](#), the Universal House of Justice stresses the "profound difference" that exists between the "interpretations of the Guardian and the elucidations of the House of Justice in exercise of its function to 'deliberate upon all problems which have caused difference, questions that are obscure, and matters that are not expressly recorded in the Book.'" (*Wellspring of Guidance*, p. 52) Among these is the outlining of such steps as are necessary to establish the [World Order of Bahá'u'lláh on this earth](#). The elucidations of the Universal House of Justice stem from its legislative function, while the interpretations of the Guardian represent the true intent inherent in the Sacred Texts. **The major distinction between the two functions is that legislation with its resultant outcome of elucidation is susceptible of amendment by the House of Justice itself, whereas the Guardian's interpretation is a statement of truth which cannot be varied.**

Shoghi Effendi has given categorical assurances that neither the Guardian nor the Universal House of Justice "can, nor will ever, infringe upon the sacred and prescribed domain of the other." Therefore, the friends can be sure that the Universal House of Justice will not engage in interpreting the Holy Writings....

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat



Comments

September 4. On this date in 2005, the UHJ wrote a letter "concerning the source of a statement about 20,000 [Babi] martyrs" given that "Some historians think the number of early Babi/Bahá'í martyrs was not 20,000, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi mentioned numerous times, but 2,000 to 3,000."

submitted1 month agobyA35821363

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BELIEVERS GATHERED AROUND THE BODY OF A MARTYR

Comments

September 5. On this date in 1954, Shoghi Effendi wrote "it seems only intense suffering is capable of rousing men to the spiritual efforts required. It seems clear to any thinking person that war will be the main cause of this degree of suffering."

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

September 5. On this date in 1954, [a letter](#) written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer stated that "Shoghi Effendi has never stated how far-reaching the effects of a future war will be, or what other catastrophes may accompany it or follow it. **From our teachings we know humanity can and must be welded into some form of political unity--such as a [World Federal State](#)--through suffering as it seems only intense suffering is capable of rousing men to the spiritual efforts required. It seems clear to any thinking person that war will be the main cause of this degree of suffering.**"

[434. We Do Not Know How Far-Reaching the Catastrophe Will Be](#)

"Shoghi Effendi has never stated how far-reaching the effects of a future war will be, or what other catastrophes may accompany it or follow it. **From our teachings we know humanity can and must be welded into some form of political unity--such as a World Federal State--through suffering as it seems only intense suffering is capable of rousing men to the spiritual efforts required. It seems clear to any thinking person that war will be the main cause of this degree of suffering.**"

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, September 5, 1954)



Comments

September 5. On this date in 1973, John Ferraby, a Custodian, died. His "All Things Made New", is notable for the changes made to it. The dedication of the book to "The First Guardian" changed to simply "The Guardian." References to "the Guardian" replaced with "the Universal House of Justice."

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

September 5. On this date in 1973, [John Ferraby](#), a [Hand of the Cause of God](#) and from 1959 to 1963 one of the nine [Custodians](#), died. He wrote [All Things Made New](#), which is notable for the changes made from the original publication in 1957 to subsequent editions published after the death of Shoghi Effendi. For example, [comparing the original 1957 edition to the 1987 edition](#), among the numerous alterations, is the replacement of his dedication of the book to "The First Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith" to simply "The Guardian." Other references to "the Guardian" have been replaced with "the Universal House of Justice."

Born on January 9, 1914, in Southsea, England, into a Jewish family, he was educated at Malvern College and King's College, Cambridge. He became a Bahá'í in 1941 and was elected as secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, which he remained until 1959. In October 1957, Ferraby was appointed a Hand of the Cause of God by Shoghi Effendi. From 1959 to 1963, he served as one of the nine Custodians at the Bahá'í World Centre.

In 1941 that he was told about the Faith by a non-Bahá'í. Wanting to know more, he found [John Esslemont's](#) book [Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era](#) in a public library. [John Esslemont's](#) book [Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era](#) remains an important text that has been used in Bahá'í missionary activity. However, from its initial publication to later editions, [Bahá'u'lláh and](#)

[the New Era](#) has been significantly edited, with references to [Avarih](#) removed in subsequent editions published after Avarih's apostasy from the Bahá'í Faith.

Ferraby was by then living in London, so he started to look for the Bahá'ís there, but he had difficulty in finding them because during the blitz, the Bahá'í Centre was empty most of the time. However, finally he found someone and after a couple of visits he wanted to be accepted as a member of the community. Almost immediately he began to work for the Faith, becoming in less than an year a member of the London Spiritual Assembly and of the [National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles](#). In 1943 he married a fellow member of the [National Assembly](#), Dorothy Cansdale.

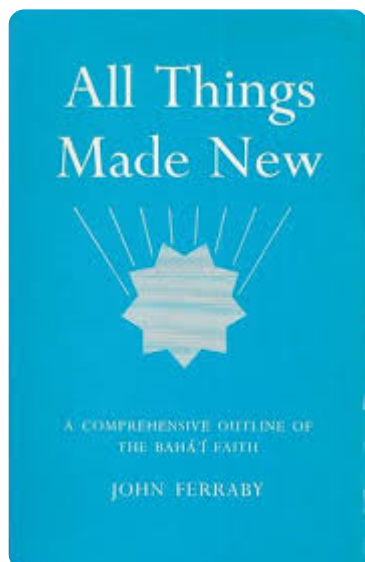
In 1946 he became secretary of the [National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles](#), working at first in his spare time and from 1950 as full-time secretary. This work he continued, living in the National [Hazíratu'l-Quds](#) in London from December 1954, until he went to serve in the Holy Land at the end of 1959. During a good deal of the time he was also manager of the British [Bahá'í Publishing Trust](#), as well as being an active teacher and committee member. From 1951 to 1956 he was busily involved in the work of the Africa Committee and during the opening of the various territories in Africa, at that time mostly colonies or protectorates, he attended to most of the government relationship, acting in his capacity of national secretary. He attended the [first Intercontinental Conference, held in Kampala, Uganda, in 1958](#), as well as the successive Intercontinental Conferences which were held in Europe.

In January 1955, he made the [Bahá'í pilgrimage](#). While in Haifa, Shoghi Effendi advised him to write his book *All Things Made New*. The book has been widely used, running to one edition of the British Isles and three in the United States. [All Things Made New](#), which is notable for the changes made from the original publication in 1957 to subsequent editions published after the death of Shoghi Effendi. For example, [comparing the original 1957 edition to the 1987 edition](#), among the numerous alterations, is the replacement of his dedication of the book to "The First Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith" to simply "The Guardian." Other references to "the Guardian" have been replaced with "the Universal House of Justice."

In 1957, Shoghi Effendi named Ferraby in the last group of Hands of the Cause. He carried a big share of the work and responsibility for the arrangements when [Shoghi Effendi died and was buried in London](#). After that he took part in the gathering of the Hands of the Cause in Haifa and stayed on there for over three months to help. In December 1959, John went to live in Haifa as one of the [Hands of the Cause resident in the Holy Land](#) and re-

mained there until Riḍván 1963. After that he returned to England and lived in Cambridge for the last ten years of his life, working for the first few years as one of the Hands of the Cause in the continent of Europe, dealing with their secretariat and traveling a good deal. Later it became no longer possible for him to serve in this way.

He died on September 5, 1973.



Comments

September 5. On this date in 1990, Emeric Sala, one of the first nine members of the NSA of Canada, died. In 1947, he received a letter from Shoghi Effendi stating "future Guardians: they cannot "abrogate" the interpretations of former Guardians, as this would imply not only lack of guidance ..."

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

September 5. On this date in 1990, [Emeric Sala](#), one of the first nine members of the NSA of Canada, died. In 1947, he received a letter from Shoghi Effendi stating "future Guardians: they cannot "abrogate" the interpretations of former Guardians, as this would imply not only lack of guidance but mistakes in making them; however they can elaborate and elucidate former interpretations, and can certainly abrogate some former ruling laid down as a temporary necessity by a former Guardian."

Emeric Sala was born on November 12, 1906 in the small Hungarian village of Havas Dombróvica, which roughly translates as "snowed-in village." He was the first of four children born to a Jewish lumber inspector and his wife. His parents later moved to Herrmannstadt in Sibbenbürgen, now Sibiu in Romania, where he spent his school years.

After the First World War and still in his teens, he made his way to Hamburg, where he landed a job as a ship's helper and set sail for the west coast of Africa. The ship returned to Hamburg and then sailed for Montréal, where he arrived in 1927.

In addition to his native Hungarian, Sala spoke Romanian, some German, French and Italian, but he did not speak a word of English. Learning the language became his obsession. Rather than simply reading books, he wanted to hear people talk, so he attended every free lecture he could find. He was especially intrigued by one public meeting at which May

Maxwell talked about the Bahá'í Faith; this led to his enrolment as a Bahá'í in 1929. He was a founding member of the first Canadian Bahá'í Youth Group in Montréal. They held classes, and attendance soon reached about 60. It was the first organized Bahá'í class for youth in the Western Hemisphere. He soon met his future wife, Rosemary Gillies, whom he married in 1934.

The English language, once his handicap, now became his strength. He established a small import business and travelled coast to coast, giving talks on the Bahá'í Faith wherever and whenever he could. In 1937, at the encouragement of May Maxwell, he extended a European business trip to include Haifa, where he had the privilege of spending an evening alone with Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith. Upon his return, Emeric Sala and Siegfried Schopflocher together purchased the first Canadian Bahá'í property at Beaulac, in the Laurentians, north of Montréal, where the country's first Bahá'í summer and winter schools were held.

In 1945, as the world emerged from World War II, Sala published *This Earth One Country*. Both Emeric and Rosemary Sala were elected to the first National Spiritual Assembly of Canada in 1948, and they continued to serve until 1953. That year, they responded to Shoghi Effendi's call for Bahá'ís to arise to serve humanity around the world. Sala transferred his business to his brother, and the couple sold their charming home on the banks of the St. Lawrence River in St. Lambert, Quebec, planning to settle in the Comoro Islands, off the east coast of Africa.

Despite their plans, the French authorities refused to grant them permission to reside in the Comoro Islands, so Shoghi Effendi asked them to settle in Zululand instead. There, they befriended many Africans, who came to refer to Rosemary Sala as "our mother". Rosemary founded school libraries and organized shipments of books from North America. After returning to Canada briefly in the late 1960s, the couple left for Guadalajara, Mexico, and then travelled extensively throughout Central America.

Rosemary Sala died in Mexico on 24 January 1980. Emeric Sala continued to serve in Mexico and later remarried. His second wife, Donya Knox, became a Bahá'í, and together they travelled throughout America, China, India and Europe.

Emeric Sala died on September 5, 1990, a few weeks after his wife's death.

On February 19, 1947, [a letter addressed](#) on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to Emeric Sala, stated "future Guardians: they cannot "abrogate" the interpretations of former Guardians, as this would imply not only lack of guidance but mistakes in making them; however they can

elaborate and elucidate former interpretations, and can certainly abrogate some former ruling laid down as a temporary necessity by a former Guardian."

19 February 1947

To Emeric Sala

Dear Bahá'í Brother:

Your letters dated October 16th and December 19th, with enclosures, were both received, and our beloved Guardian regrets very much the unavoidable delay in answering you, caused by pressure of certain urgent matters that arose.

He feels that there must have been some misapprehension on your part of his statements regarding **future Guardians: they cannot "abrogate" the interpretations of former Guardians, as this would imply not only lack of guidance but mistakes in making them; however they can elaborate and elucidate former interpretations, and can certainly abrogate some former ruling laid down as a temporary necessity by a former Guardian.**

You asked his views about your statement on the Bahá'í Faith and Communism: frankly he feels that the less the friends discuss Communism, and the Faith in connection with it, the better these days, as the subject is a burning issue, and no matter how discreet we are we run the risk of being involved in this highly political issue.

He wishes you to know that he very deeply appreciates the innumerable services you and your dear wife render the Faith. Reports of your South American work have reached him, as well as your own report of your fifth western trip, and he is delighted to see the response you are getting from the public. Your book has, likewise, been a very useful addition to the teaching literature of the Faith in English, and you must rejoice to see the way God is blessing your labours for His Cause.

Tremendous work still remains to be done in Canada before the approaching election of its first National Spiritual Assembly ; he hopes you and Mrs. Sala will devote as much of your time to this field as you can.

Assuring you of his loving prayers on your behalf, and for the success of your services.

Yours with Bahá'í love,

R. Rabbani

P.S. Through Mr. Schopfloch he recently learned of your joint gift of a property to the Cause in Canada for a Summer School. This is much appreciated, and he hopes it will develop into a fine institution in the future!

May the Beloved, Whose Cause you are serving with such zeal, devotion and perseverance, reward you for your labours, guide every step you take in the path of service, and aid you to enrich the record of your meritorious and notable accomplishments,

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Comments

September 6. On this date in 1934, Shoghi Effendi wrote "The highest standards of purity, of integrity, of detachment and sacrifice must be maintained by the members of your group in order to enable you to play a decisive part in the spread and consolidation of the Faith."

submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

September 6. On this date in 1934, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#) "The highest standards of purity, of integrity, of detachment and sacrifice must be maintained by the members of your group in order to enable you to play a decisive part in the spread and consolidation of the Faith."

[2240](#). The work in which you are engaged is dear and near to my heart and constitutes one of the most vital aspects of the manifold activities of our beloved Faith. The highest standards of purity, of integrity, of detachment and sacrifice must be maintained by the members of your group in order to enable you to play a decisive part in the spread and consolidation of the Faith. A tremendous responsibility has been laid upon you, and nothing short of a pure, a virtuous, an active and truly exemplary life can enable you to fulfil your high destiny. I will pray that you may be guided and strengthened to render the most effective service to the Cause and by your example lend a fresh impetus to the onward march of its new-born institutions.

(In the handwriting of Shoghi Effendi, appended to a letter dated 6 September 1934 written on his behalf to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada Youth Council)



Comments

September 6. On this date in 1946, Shoghi Effendi wrote of "the paramount necessity for Bahá'í Youth to exemplify the Teachings, most particularly the moral aspect of them. If they are not distinguished for their high conduct they cannot expect other young people to take the Cause very seriously."

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September 6. On this date in 1946, [a letter](#) written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi wrote "The Guardian has urged, over and over again, the paramount necessity for Bahá'í Youth to exemplify the Teachings, most particularly the moral aspect of them. If they are not distinguished for their high conduct they cannot expect other young people to take the Cause very seriously."

[2285](#). The Guardian has urged, over and over again, the paramount necessity for Bahá'í Youth to exemplify the Teachings, most particularly the moral aspect of them. If they are not distinguished for their high conduct they cannot expect other young people to take the Cause very seriously.

He heartily agrees with you that unless we practise the Teachings we cannot possibly expect the Faith to grow, because the fundamental purpose of all religions--including our own--is to bring man nearer to God, and to change his character, which is of the utmost importance. Too much emphasis is often laid on the social and economic aspects of the Teachings; but the moral aspect cannot be over-emphasized.

(6 September 1946 to an individual believer)



Comments

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submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

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Joseph Perdu was a Bahá'í who was active in Australia, having arrived from India in 1948 and [earning the praise](#) of Shoghi Effendi for his "enthusiastic support". Perdu's explanations of the Islamic teachings concerning the "day of resurrection" and the "seal of the prophets" from a Bahá'í perspective were instrumental in converting Fazel "Frank" Khan and his family. He and his family were the first Muslims in Australia to convert to the Bahá'í Faith, doing so in 1948. Frank Khan would serve on the NSA of Australia, as would his children Joy Vohradsky and [Peter Khan](#), who also served on the [International Teaching Centre](#) and [Universal House of Justice](#).

In July of 1950 Joseph Perdu [visited Fiji](#), and converted some Islamic ([Ahmadi](#)) Indian Fijians.

Joseph Perdu attracted many people to the Bahá'í Faith in Australia as well as Fiji, until his habit of borrowing money from his listeners and failing to repay them became intolerable.

Messages to Australian Bahá'ís about Joseph Perdu include those dated [November 23, 1949](#); [June 28, 1950](#); [March 1, 1951](#); and [June 3, 1952](#).

A [warning](#) was sent to American Bahá'ís on August 23, 1950 about Perdu's travels to Hawaii and the United States mainland. A [warning](#) was sent to British Bahá'ís on September 6, 1950, about Perdu's having met [Ahmad Sohrab](#).

In the 1950's, Joseph Perdu [became resident](#) in South Africa. From [Shamil Jeppie's *Language, Identity, Modernity: The Arabic Study Circle of Durban...*](#)

Perhaps the most controversial of these was Joseph Perdu, already resident in South Africa, and active in Cape Town. Invited to Durban in 1954, "Monsieur" Perdu proved to be a persuasive and charismatic speaker, a challenging gadfly, well-versed in the Koran and *hadith*, drawing large numbers to his talks. He later offered tafsir classes. But, the unorthodoxy of his views soon drew opponents and he was attacked in pamphlets. His critics were indeed justified, inasmuch he was an undercover Baha'i missionary. With the exception of a few of Perdu's converts in Cape Town, the Baha'i religion was unknown in South Africa and the true nature of Perdu's beliefs were not readily recognized, even by his critics. Suspensions were verified by Mall, who visited Baha'i headquarters in Bombay where he learned the identity of Perdu, who was an Iranian and who had already proselytized in several other countries. The Circle then quietly distanced itself from Perdu, but this episode tainted the group for decades with its critics. Perdu left South Africa in 1959, having been excommunicated by his hierarchy. Jeppie has also published a separate article in the *Journal of Islamic Studies* on this influential figure. ([Shamil Jeppie](#), "Identity Politics and Public Disputation: A Baha'i Missionary as a Muslim Modernist in South Africa," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 27 (2007): 150-172.)

In South Africa, Joseph Perdu employed an [indirect teaching method](#), giving lecture on Islam to Muslims and only [overtly introducing](#) those he felt were prepared to the Bahá'í message.

From the book [Heroes and Heroines of the Ten-year Crusade](#) by [Lowell Johnson](#), pages 283-86...

[Majiet \(Michael\) and Asa Noor](#)

Majiet and Asa Noor enrolled as Baha'is in Cape Town on 3 September 1961. Both of them had attended Joseph Perdu's lectures on Islam along with the Davids and Gallow families. But they, like the [Davids](#), had not been singled out by Perdu to receive the direct Baha'i Message because Perdu felt that they were still too attached to the Qur'an and Islam. However, when the Gallows enrolled they, along with the Davids, the Tarin and Bayat families, began to re-examine Islam in the light of Baha'u'llah's teachings. Majiet and Asa were the first to declare, followed within a few days by the Davids, the Tarins and the Bayats.

Majiet explains in detail how the Faith was spread after the declarations of the Gallow family and his role in it: 'I heard about a lecture at the Avalon Bioscope, Hanover St., Cape Town. It was a very rainy day and I did not feel like going but opposite my house was a bus stop, and I stood on my stoep debating to myself. Along came a bus and I jumped in. It

made up my mind for me. I thoroughly enjoyed the lecture on "Koran and Science" given by Joseph Perdu (whom I later was to find was a Covenant-breaker). He delivered a series of lectures and I attended them all. I was much impressed by this new learning; it gave me great thought as it threw so much light on religion itself. 'This same man, Perdu, afterwards, held classes for about a dozen of us. In these he pointed directly to a new revelation and a new manifestation. The matter was so clear that we accepted the the idea but I thought this can only happen in a hundred years' time.

In those classes he never mentioned Baha'u'llah or the Baha'i Faith.

'One morning in late June 1961 I woke up and said my morning prayer. It was a beautiful winter's day. I read one of the chapters out of the Koran that Perdu spoke about. I sat and pondered over these verses and wished I knew the inner meaning. On my way to work I met Toyar Gallow. He asked me if I was still searching for Truth as he remembered that I attended classes with him. I was asking myself when all this was to take place. He laughed and told me to visit him at his workshop [at the Michaelis School of Art] as I worked close to him.

'Somehow I never made it, but Toyar came to visit me two days later. Funny enough, he asked me if it was possible for a new prophet to come. When I told him it was possible, he laughed and said two prophets had already made their appearance. He started to explain the verse I had read that particular morning, a wonderful feeling enveloped me and I knew that this was what I was seeking. He made me promise not to tell anyone what he had told me.

'Afterwards, Toyar took me to his brother Amien's place [in Surrey Estate] where I learned more about the Baha'i Faith and they told me they were declared Baha'is. I made enquiries about a photo of 'Abdu'l-Baha that was displayed on a table and was told this was the "Mystery of God". I wasn't very happy with this reply as I was not used to seeing pictures of Holy Souls. When I left, Amien gave me the Dawn-Breakers to read.

'All this that I had read and heard, worried and fascinated me and I felt I must speak to others about it although I was warned not to. I met Gabeba Davids at Cassiem's house in Horstley St. I told her there was much more to the lectures we attended [together] and that there's a new spirit in the world. She did not actually know what I was speaking about but agreed there was a new feeling. 'Toyar promised to take me to a meeting. He picked me up at my house in Stegman Rd, Claremont, and took me to Tommy Heuvel's house in Maitland. Lowell and Edith Johnson were also there. I was impressed by the happy fellow-

ship that prevailed. I was hoping to attend all the meetings they had. After the meeting Lowell took me home as he was staying quite near.

'That Sunday morning Amien came to see me to find out how far I was with the Dawn-Breakers. I told him this book was quite heavy reading and I was not used to reading this kind of literature. I walked with him to his car. As he started to leave, my wife and Naomi Rasiet returned from Arabic classes. I told them had some Great News, so we set a date to bring them to his house.

'The three of us [plus Gabeba] visited his house one Sunday and had a class together. We all learned a lot. As we read The Hidden Words I knew that this was nothing but the Truth. That night before we left, Amien showed us an album of photographs of Baha'u'llah's bed, His slippers, the Prison in which He was held, etc. This seemed to have stunned all of us. As we looked at each other we saw the expressions on each other's face that it could not be right as our Muslim belief did not go with such things. However, when we left, Amien gave Gabeba and Naomi each a book. He gave me the Kitab-i-Iqan to read.

'In the meantime I had ordered some books from the C.N.A. [Central News Agency] and the very next day I received three books, one was Baha'u'llah and the New Era. That night I started reading the Kitab-i-Iqan. I could not stop reading it and found myself still reading when the sun came up.

'During the time that Lowell took me to meetings I met Leon Tarin and took him home with me. I asked him if he believed a new prophet could come. He said "perhaps", as he also had attended Perdu's lectures. When I told him that a new prophet had already come, he said I was mad. The next day I gave him Baha'u'llah and the New Era to read, and the following day he brought it back agreeing that the book was good. Leon was very receptive. While we were speaking Lowell came to pick me up for a meeting and I told him Lowell was a Baha'i. Leon called me aside and asked permission to go with us, so we all left. Leon had now met the Baha'is and was making his own investigations.

'I made up my mind to visit Cassiem Davids and tell him about this new Faith. As I walked into his shop in Stuckeris St., he asked me what is this we were busy with, and I told him what I had read about the Baha'i Faith. Afterwards, Cassiem and myself with Asa, Gabeba, Naomi and the rest of our families had many discussions. At the same time Ismail Bayat also joined in.

'I was now strongly convinced the Baha'i Faith was true and Toyar was telling me it was time for me to declare. Somehow or other I did not get down to it, although I was now more or less following the Baha'i principles more than my own.

'On Sunday the 3rd September 1961 about 3 o'clock, the Tarins were all ready to go somewhere. I asked them where they were going. They said they were going to Tommy's place in Maitland and asked me to go with them. I got a feeling they were going to declare. I knew that I was going to declare, but we said nothing to each other.

'Through all this period my wife was watching my actions, and at one time became quite negative toward me. This did not last very long as I pointed out to her why I was going to become a Baha'i. I asked Leon if I could phone my wife and ask her to go with us, so we picked her up on the way to Tommy's house. When we got there we sat around the table and Tommy came in with the declaration cards and a prayer book and said to Leon, "I believe you are ready to declare," and he handed him a card. Leon took the card. Tommy then asked him if the others were ready to declare. He said, "Yes, my wife [Amina], daughter Qameela] and son-in-law [Abdullah Gameeldien] are ready."

'Tommy asked me, "What about you?" I said "Yes, I was ready long ago." He then asked me about my wife. I remembered Lowell had told me a story of someone who was blamed for influencing his wife to become a Baha'i. I was not going to allow myself to fall into that same situation. But to my astonishment she said that she would declare.

'As I watched them sign I was watching for my wife to sign first, as I remembered that story from Lowell.

'I then declared.'

Soon Majiet and Asa were put to the test by challenges from the clergy and being dis-owned by their parents and relatives. Majiet lost his job as he was also a tailor like Cassiem Davids, but employed by clothing factories managed by Muslims. Asa was a teacher at a Muslim School and also lost her job. The Noors and their children struggled against such prejudices for many years.

After the Crusade, both Asa and Majiet served at various times on the Spiritual Assembly of Cape Town and in the teaching field, Majiet as a travelling teacher to many parts of southern Africa, as far as South West Africa and Swaziland. Their children also became active Baha'i teachers and administrators. Later in life Majiet changed his name to Michael to avoid an Islamic label. Asa went on pilgrimage to the Baha'i World Centre in 1968 and

Majiet on pilgrimage to both the Holy Land and to Iran in 1970 (See entries for Davids, Gallow, Perdu.)

Identity politics and public disputation: A Baha'i missionary as a Muslim modernist in South Africa

Shamil Jeppie
(University of Cape Town)

Abstract

This paper focuses on the Arabic Study Circle and the role of its most influential member Joseph Perdu. It shows how the public life of the organization could not continue to bear the ambiguity of the identity of Perdu. Ultimately, there were attempts to 'expose' the 'real' Perdu and therefore the 'real' Arabic Study Circle. This essay raises the question of public performances of identity and their relations to private pursuits of identity.

The Arabic Study Circle was founded in the early 1950s in the port city of Durban on South Africa's East Coast. It was formed by a group of mainly Gujarati-speaking men in their early thirties who believed that learning the Arabic language was the key to independent reading and study of the Quran and other foundational sources of Islamic thought. The main figure behind the group was a local medical doctor, Dr. Daoud Mall, who was educated at Fort Hare University College in the Eastern Cape and at Sheffield University in England. He died in 2003 while nominally still the President of what remains of the original organization.

No history of the Circle would be complete without attempting to narrate in some detail the period when a charismatic foreign visitor to the country was employed by it. During this time his public engagements captured many hearts and minds for the Circle, but also for his own hidden cause. He gave the group a boost but also created many lasting problems for them. His "national identity", citizenship or country of birth was known neither to members of the Circle nor to

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Comments

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Purification of Haram-i-Aqdas Announce to Hands and all National Assemblies that following the loss of the appeal to the Supreme Court, the Government expropriation order has been implemented, resulting in the complete evacuation of the remnant of Covenant-breakers and the transfer of all their belongings from the precincts of the Most Holy Shrine, and the purification, after six long decades, of the Haram-i-Aqdas from every trace of their contamination. Measures under way to effect transfer of title deeds of the evacuated property to the triumphant Bahá'í community.

--Shoghi

[Cablegram, September 6, 1957]

The "purification" is described in pages 248 and 249 of [The Bahá'í World: Volume 13 \(1954-1963\)](#)...

In April, 1957 Shoghi Effendi announced to the Bahá'í world that an expropriation order relating to the "entire property owned by [Covenant-breakers](#) within the [Haram-i-Aqdas](#)" had been issued by the Treasury Department of the [Government of Israel](#) and published in the Israel Official Gazette. Behinds this lay a hard and protracted struggle, waged in the Guardian's name by [Leroy loas](#), Hand of the Cause in Haifa and Secretary-General of the [International Bahá'í Council](#). An appeal against the appropriation order was made by the [Covenant-breakers](#) to Israel's Supreme Court, but on June 3, 1957 Shoghi Effendi cabled the triumphant news that the order had been upheld, "enabling the civil authorities to enforce the original decision and proceed with the **eviction of the wretched remnants of the once redoubtable adversaries** . . ." On September 6, 1957 a further cable announced their "complete evacuation . . . and the purification . . . of the [Haram-i-Aqdas](#) from every trace of **their contamination**." At long last the [Qiblih](#) of the Bahá'í world had been cleansed and the way opened to fulfill, in future decades, the Guardian's vision for the construction of a "stately and befitting [Mausoleum](#) designed to enshrine the holiest Dust the earth ever received into its bosom."

It had been Shoghi Effendi's wish to direct in person the razing of the buildings evacuated by the [enemies of the Cause](#), but this was not to be, and it fell to the Hands of the Cause in Haifa to carry out this task. It was their first endeavour, and by December, 1957 no trace of the buildings was left. They then proceeded to enlarge the gardens of the [Haram-i-Aqdas](#) according to the Guardian's plan, covering the site of the buildings entirely, and raising the third terrace he had planned toward the east, above the two he himself had completed. To the east of the [Mansion](#) a long strip of garden was planted, comprising four thousand square metres, also part of the Guardian's plan.

The Hands succeeded, moreover, in effecting the Guardian's purpose to transfer the title deeds of this evacuated property **"to the triumphant Bahá'í community."** In a deed of sale from the State of Israel, **thirteen separate titles** for the [Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh](#) , the [Mansion of Bahjí](#), and all the newly-acquired properties were transferred to the name of the Israel Branch of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States.

Thus did the [Sign of God on earth](#) achieve ascendancy in his last hours, glorifying his ministry, and fulfilling one stage of his own promise for the World Centre of the Faith: "Resistlessly will this Divine institution flourish and expand, however fierce the animosity which its future enemies may evince, until the full measure of its splendour will have been disclosed before the eyes of all mankind."

It should be noted that in this text Shoghi Effendi is called "the Sign of God on earth," which is what the term "[Ayatollah](#)" means.

Also, the "thirteen separate titles" include some property that a November 12, 1952 [cable-gram](#) sent by Shoghi Effendi announced as "acquisition of vitally-needed property" of the Mansion of Bahji and the area around it from "the [Development Authority of the State of Israel](#)...The exchange of said property, including land and houses, was made possible by the [precipitate flight of the former Arab owners](#)."

The "purification" would continue under the Universal House of Justice, who on November 11, 1965 sent [a cable](#) announcing the "removal from immediate precincts (of the) holy shrine (of) Bahá'u'lláh remains (of) [Mirza Díyá'u'lláh](#)."

26 Purification of the Most Holy Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, the Qiblih of the Bahá'í World 11 NOVEMBER 1965

To all National Spiritual Assemblies

26.1 ANNOUNCE BAHÁ'Í WORLD REMOVAL FROM IMMEDIATE PRECINCTS HOLY SHRINE BAHÁ'U'LLAH REMAINS [MIRZA DIYA'U'LLAH](#) YOUNGER BROTHER [MIRZA MUHAMMAD ALI](#) HIS ACCOMPLICE IN EFFORTS SUBVERT FOUNDATIONS COVENANT GOD SOON AFTER ASCENSION BAHÁ'U'LLAH. THIS FINAL STEP IN PROCESS PURIFICATION SACRED INTERNATIONAL ENDOWMENTS FAITH IN BAHJI FROM PAST CONTAMINATION WAS PROVIDENTIALLY UNDERTAKEN UPON REQUEST FAMILY OLD COVENANT BREAKERS A PROCESS WHOSE INITIAL STAGE WAS FULFILLED BY ABDU'L-BAHA WHICH GATHERED MOMENTUM EARLY YEARS BELOVED GUARDIAN'S MINISTRY THROUGH EVACUATION MANSION ATTAINED CLIMAX THROUGH PURIFICATION HARAM-I-AQDAS AND NOW CONSUMMATED THROUGH CLEANSING INNER SANCTUARY MOST HALLOWED SHRINE QIBLIH Bahá'í WORLD PRESAGING EVENTUAL CONSTRUCTION BEFITTING MAUSOLEUM AS ANTICIPATED BELOVED SIGN GOD ON EARTH.

UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE



Comments

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submitted 1 month ago by A35821363

September 6. On this date in 2005, [David Ruhe](#), a member of the Universal House of Justice from 1968 to 1993, died. According to one source, the [Ruhi Institute](#) was named after him as well as after the father of [Farzam Arbab](#), who founded the [Ruhi Institute](#) and served on the Universal House of Justice from 1993 to 2013, when he retired.

[David S. Ruhe](#) (January 3, 1913 - September 6, 2005) was a medical doctor, filmmaker, and author who served in various positions within the hierarchy of the [Bahá'í Administrative Order], including as a member of the Universal House of Justice from 1968 to 1993.

Having graduated from the Temple University School of Medicine in 1941, David Ruhe would go on to conduct malaria research at the United States Public Health Service where he would eventually become medical director. In 1954 he would go to the University of Kansas School of Medicine where he became the first professor of Medical Communications.

He made scores of medical films, winning awards for his productions from the Golden Reel, the Venice Film Festival, and the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain. In the course of his work in medical education, he was appointed director of the Medical Film Institute for the Association of American Medical Colleges.

After his conversion to the Bahá'í Faith, in 1941, Ruhe became an active member of the Bahá'í community, serving on numerous Local Spiritual Assemblies and national Bahá'í committees. Elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States in 1959, he served as its secretary from 1963 until 1968, when he was elected to the Universal House of Justice. He would serve on that body until retiring in 1993.

Upon his retirement from the Universal House of Justice in 1993, Ruhe and his wife, Margaret, returned to New York State. They have two sons, Christopher, who is a musician, and Douglas, who at one time co-owned [United Press International](#) with fellow Bahá'í William Geissler.

Writings

Ruhe, David (1983). *Door of Hope: The Bahá'í Faith in the Holy Land*. Oxford, England: George Ronald Publisher Ltd.

Ruhe, David (1997). *Robe of Light: The Persian Years of the Supreme Prophet, Bahá'u'lláh*. Oxford, England: George Ronald Publisher Ltd.



Comments

September 7. On this date in 1871, Mehmed Emin Âli Pasha, the Ottoman Grand Vizier behind the decision to exile Bahá'u'lláh and his companions from Edirne to Acre, died. In August 1868, Bahá'u'lláh had addressed his Súriy-i-Ra'ís and Lawh-i-Ra'ís to Alí Páshá.

submitted 29 days ago by A35821363

September 7. On this date in 1871, [Mehmed Emin Âli Pasha](#), the Ottoman Grand Vizier behind the decision to exile Bahá'u'lláh and his companions from Edirne to Acre, died. In August 1868, Bahá'u'lláh had addressed his [Súriy-i-Ra'ís](#) ([Tablet of the Premier](#)) and [Lawh-i-Ra'ís](#) ([Tablet of the Chief](#)) to [Alí Páshá](#). Juan Cole describes some of the political atmosphere in the Ottoman Empire at the time in his "[Lawh-i-Fu'ád: notes by Juan Cole](#)", wherein he notes "It is important to note how political Bahá'u'lláh's statements in this tablet are, and how candidly seditious" and "Although Bahá'u'lláh was correct that neither of these powerful men had long at the top in 1869, his prophecy, if taken literally, actually reverses their true fates."

On August 12, 1968, Bahá'u'lláh and his companions were exiled from Edirne to Acre due to a decision made by "[Sultan Abdulaziz](#) and his cabinet in reaction to [Azali](#) complaints and the importuning of the Iranian ambassador."

[Juan Cole](#) describes some of the political atmosphere in the Ottoman Empire at the time of this exile in his "[Lawh-i-Fu'ád: notes by Juan Cole](#)".

Of note,

The [Tablet of Fuad](#) was written to commemorate the death of [Kecicizade Fuad Páshá](#) in Nice of heart trouble, in February, 1869. Therefore it was presumably penned in late winter or early spring of that year, during Bahá'u'lláh's close confinement in the fortress of Acre

(Akká). [Fuad Páshá](#) was the son of a famed poet, and he himself studied medicine. Although [Fuad Páshá](#) is presented in this tablet as a despot, he is remembered in Turkish historiography rather as a reformer. Born in Istanbul in 1815, he was among the foremost planners and implementers of the [Tanzimat](#) or reorganization of the Ottoman administration in the nineteenth century so as to bring it closer to modern Western standards. Because of his fluent French, he was able to enter and rise high in the foreign ministry. In 1840 he was first secretary of the Ottoman Embassy in England.

...

Fuad Páshá was intimately involved in decisions affecting Bahá'u'lláh. He was grand vizier in 1863 when Bahá'u'lláh was brought from Baghdad to Istanbul, presumably to remove him from close proximity to his followers in Iran and also to investigate whether [Babism](#) under his leadership might be politically useful to the Ottomans in the relations with Iran. (In this regard the summoning of Bahá'u'lláh to Istanbul prefigures [Abdulhamid II](#)'s attempt to use Iranians such as [Sayyid Jamálu'd-Din al-Afghani](#) and [Mírzá Áqá Khán Kirmani](#) for political purposes vis-a-vis Iran during his campaign for pan-Islam during the 1880s and 1890s). [Fuad Páshá](#) must certainly have taken the decision to rusticate Bahá'u'lláh to Edirne (Adrianople) in November of 1863. He was also involved, as grand vizier and then foreign minister, in making the decision to send Bahá'u'lláh to Acre nearly five years later. As a defender of the more secular values of the [Tanzimat](#) reforms, [Fuad Páshá](#) was probably suspicious (as we know his colleague [Mehmet Emin Alí Páshá](#) was) of [Babism](#) as an old-style theocratic [Mahdist](#) movement that attacked modernity. In 1866 [Alí Páshá](#) told the Austrian ambassador in Istanbul that Bahá'u'lláh, then in exile in Edirne, was "a man of great distinction, exemplary conduct, great moderation, and a most dignified figure" and spoke of [Babism](#) as "a doctrine which is worthy of high esteem." He went on to say, however, that he still found the religion politically unacceptable because it refused to recognize a separation of religious and temporal authority. From the reformers' point of view a messianic movement such as [Babism](#), whatever its virtues, threatened the achievements of the [Tanzimat](#) by seeking to put all authority, religious and secular, back in the hands of a charismatic spiritual leader. I would argue that, ironically, Bahá'u'lláh was moving away from a theocratic model toward one that acknowledged the autonomy of the civil state, and that there was a convergence between his thought and the [Tanzimat](#) that, tragically, the Ottoman state was unable to grasp because of [Babism](#)'s previous reputation as a vehicle for radical theocracy.

Around the fall of 1867, Bahá'u'lláh in Edirne wrote a letter ([The Tablet of the Kings or Súrat al-Mulúk](#)) apostrophizing the world's rulers, in which he addressed Ottoman

cabinet officials and to Sultan Abdulaziz. Bahá'u'lláh therein disavows any theocratic or [mahdist](#) pretensions, denying that he wishes to lay hold on the worldly possessions of these high officials, and insisting that he is not in rebellion against the Ottoman Sultán. He does say that [Sultán AbdulAzíz](#) should be grateful to God for having made him "Sultán of the Muslims," and calls him the "shadow of God on earth." He thus underlines that the civil state derives its ultimate authority from God, but that Bahá'u'lláh's coming does not challenge in any way its authority, since he wishes only to give ethical and spiritual counsel.

We do not know if the [Tablet to the Kings](#) actually was sent to the [Sublime Porte](#), though that seems likely. Its attempt at conciliation, in any case, failed. By spring of 1868 [Sultan Abdulaziz](#) and his cabinet, in reaction to [AzAlí](#) complaints and the importuning of the Iranian ambassador, had decided to exile Bahá'u'lláh and his companions from Edirne to Acre. Grand Vizier or [First Minister Alí Páshá](#) and [Foreign Minister Fuad Páshá](#) were intimately involved in this decision, which had implications for the Ottoman Empire's relations with Iran and also had the potential to raise protests from the European ambassadors concerned about freedom of conscience. But the motives for taking this step among the high Ottoman elite probably differed. Fuad and Alí could have cared less about Islamic orthodoxy, but they wanted to please Iran for reasons of Realpolitik. Ironically, they may also have worried about the Bábís as Muslim critics of their autocracy. The Islamic backlash against the secularizing [Tanzimat](#) reforms had taken two forms. One was the reactionary critique by the conservative Ottoman Muslim clergy (ulema), which had been implicated in the 1858 [Kuleli](#) revolt against the Westernizing government. Many of Bahá'u'lláh's statements in his letters to the Ottoman state, calling it back to God, and critiquing its secularizing principles, could have been read as belonging in this reactionary tradition. The other Islamic response was that of the [Young Ottomans](#), a society founded in 1865, who combined an interest in Islamic mysticism and culture with an Ottoman nationalism and a commitment to parliamentary governance and civil rights. Many of these individuals were government translators and had a good knowledge of European languages and of the Enlightenment tradition of thinking about government and rights. One of these was named Sadik [Sadiq] Effendi, and he almost certainly met Bahá'u'lláh and `Abdu'l-Bahá in the fortress of Acre (Akká).

...

This fascinating glimpse into the cultural and political situation of the Ottoman empire in 1868 provides obvious [further context to Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet of Fuad](#). It suggests, for one thing, that **predictions of the Sultán's downfall, such as Bahá'u'lláh made in that Tab-**

let, were not unusual but rather were commonplaces of the religious discourse of the time. Second, it shows how a mosque preacher at the time might get enough Western education to be considered a member of the *effendi* (Westernized secretary) class, and how such men were mixing an Islamic critique of what they saw as Fuad and Ali's extreme Westernization with an Enlightenment critique of their top-down, highly authoritarian approach to government. I suppose there is a parallel between the 'republicanism' of these Muslim [Young Ottomans](#) and the similar pro-republican stance that the American Baptists took during the 1776 revolution. Third, and most suggestive of all, the French periodical describing Sadik Effendi's exile to the Fortress of Akká is dated Feb. 28, 1869!! It seems to me almost certain that he interacted with the Bahá'ís also imprisoned in the fortress, and while Bahá'u'lláh had his own reasons to condemn Fuad Páshá, his likely dialogue with [Young Ottoman](#) thought of the time is probably part of the picture. Note that at that moment, [Young Ottomans](#) like [Namik Kemal](#) were in exile in London, calling for British-style parliamentary governance in the Ottoman empire, and that Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet to Queen Victoria, written in Akká sometime 1868-1869 also did. It is not impossible, in fact, that Sadik Effendi was able surreptitiously to correspond with other [Young Ottomans](#) who reported developments to him.

...

Now Bahá'u'lláh turns to a prophecy similar to but more specific than his [jeremiads](#) in the [Tablet of the Premier \(Súrat ar-Ra'ís\)](#) addressed to Alí Páshá. Speaking with the voice of God (using the royal "we"), Bahá'u'lláh predicts that Alí Páshá, then grand vizier, will be deposed (the verb is 'azala, which is used of deposing kings). He says, too, that God will "lay hold" (the verb is akhadha, to take, seize) of Sultán AbdulAzíz (he is called amiruhum, literally, "their prince" or "their commander"). **Although Bahá'u'lláh was correct that neither of these powerful men had long at the top in 1869, his prophecy, if taken literally, actually reverses their true fates.** Alí Páshá was never deposed, but rather died in office in 1871. It was Sultán AbdulAzíz who was deposed, in the [Constitutional Revolution of spring, 1876](#), shortly after which he committed suicide. Obviously, if Bahá'u'lláh had merely meant to predict that eventually these two men would die, then the prophecy was not very remarkable. Rather, he seems to have believed that Alí Páshá would fall from the Sultán's favor, and that some dramatic event would overtake the Sultán. Even contemporaries such as [Mírzá Abu'l-Fadl Gulpaygani](#), who became a Bahá'í in 1876 on hearing of the Sultán's fall, had demanded that the latter meet some extraordinary fate before he would accept that the prophecy in the [Tablet of Fuad](#) had been fulfilled. Taken together with Bahá'u'lláh's prediction in the Tablet of the Premier that turmoil would

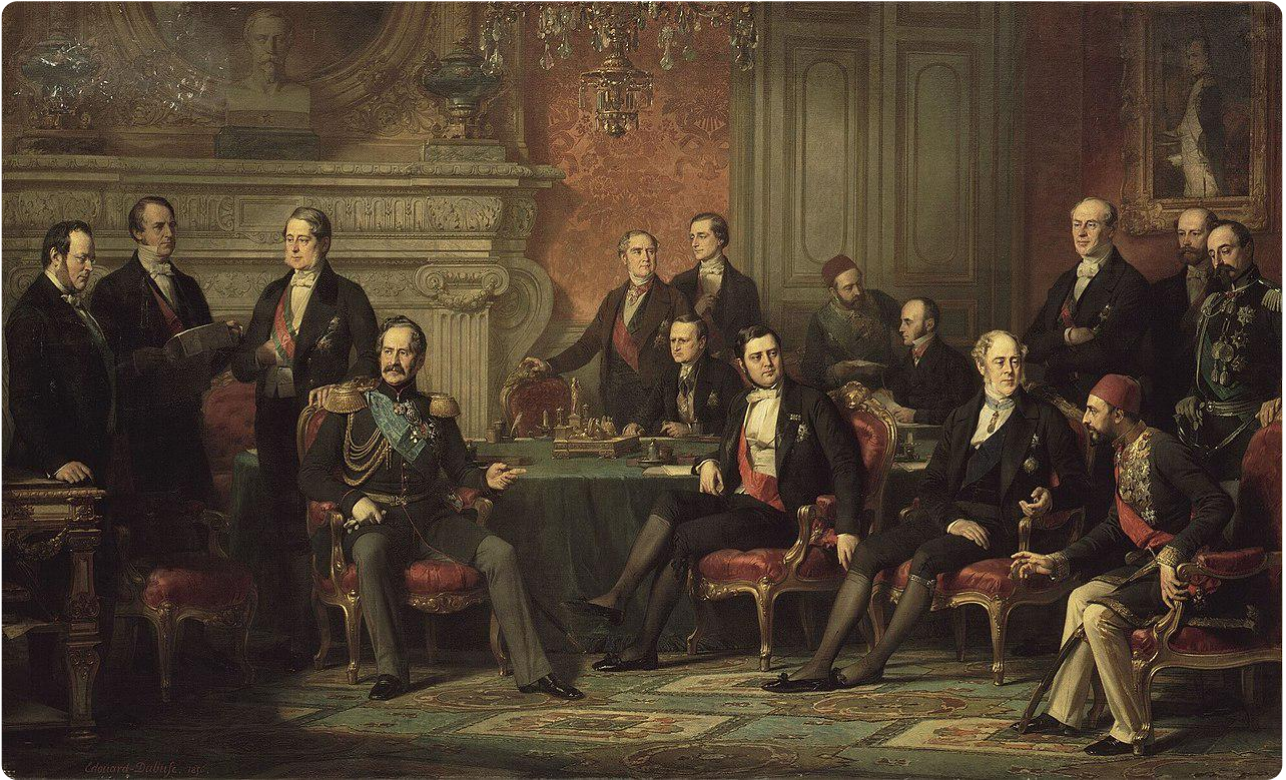
overtake the Ottoman empire and his advocacy from his early Acre years of parliamentary democracy, he does seem to have been prescient about the imminence of the [First Constitutional Revolution](#)). Indeed, the matter of Alí Páshá never being deposed seems minor in comparison.

It is important to note how political Bahá'u'lláh's statements in this tablet are, and how candidly seditious. Any published or openly circulated criticism of the Sultán and his ministers, who still presided over an absolute monarchy despite their moves toward cabinet government, was strictly forbidden and punishable by death. Had the [Tablet of Fuad](#) fallen into Ottoman hands, it could well have led to Bahá'u'lláh's summary execution. As noted above, the only other group that engaged in a similar critique of Fuad Páshá and Alí Páshá, charging them with being overly authoritarian and arguing that the Tanzimat abandonment of spirituality had gone too far, while working for British-style parliamentary governance, was the Young Ottomans (as noted above). This group of intellectuals, many of whom had a Western education and who were well aware of the U.S. Bill of Rights and the French Rights of Man, had a more mainstream political style than did Bahá'u'lláh. But despite his Miltonian imagery, his prophetic rhetorical style, and his Bábí passion, by 1869 Bahá'u'lláh was advocating a political program in the Ottoman Empire and Iran that differed very little from that of Young Ottomans such as [Namik Kemal](#). (In his Tablet to Queen Victoria of 1868 or 1869, he advocated parliamentary rule, another value that was strictly prohibited in Ottoman political discourse). **The stark Bahá'í turn to political quietism from the 1930s has resulted in a view of Bahá'u'lláh that reads back into his period the later skittishness about politics, a view made possible only by ignorance of Ottoman imperial policy of the time with regard to politics and censorship. The [Tablet of Fuad](#) is as radical a document in its own time as Tom Paine's revolutionary pamphlets were.**

The last part of the [Tablet of Fuad](#) appears to contain a condemnation of [Mírzá Yahyá Subh-i Azal](#) (d. 1912), Bahá'u'lláh's half-brother and a widely recognized leader of the Bábís, with whom Bahá'u'lláh was in competition for the leadership of the Bábí community. Despite the disadvantages of his confinement in the fortress of Acre, Bahá'u'lláh appears to have been already well on the way to winning over most of the Bábís by his assertion that he was the promised one of the Báb. Finally, there is a passage about God having seized or taken "al-Mahdi." The Mahdi is, of course, the Islamic promised one who is expected to fill the world with justice after it had been filled with injustice. I am not sure whether this is an ironic way of referring one last time to Fuad Páshá, or whether it is the name of an enemy of Bahá'u'lláh's who had recently died. "Mihdí" is a common Iranian

personal name. [Khazeh Fananapazir](#) has wrote to me that this Mahdi was in fact an Azali, and was the recipient of the Kitáb-i Badí' (The Book of Wonder), Bahá'u'lláh's major apologia to the Bábís. This Mihdí was in the circle of Sayyid Muhammad Isfahani, and had written a fierce denunciation of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Tablet of Fuad was called by Baron Rosen a "victory hymn" in celebration of an enemy's death. This is an apt description, but this short piece is much more than that. It condemns the autocratic leadership style of the Tanzimat men, with their vision of modernization dictated from above. It playfully pokes fun at their increasing secularization by depicting one of them at the gates of hell surrounded by vengeful angels, who strike him down for his impudence, taunt him for his unbelief and his despotic deeds, and unceremoniously dump him into the inferno. **Fuad Páshá is lambasted as more of a tyrant than Pharaoh, and the entire Ottoman state is thus painted with the same brush.** The issues of rights and due process are also key to this tablet. Fuad's crime is to condemn the Bahá'ís to imprisonment without proof of any wrongdoing on their part. Because of their iniquity and despotism, the top three officers of the Ottoman state are here consigned to unpleasant ends. Fuad Páshá suddenly dies at a relatively young 53 or 54, far from home and from his loved ones. The deposition of Alí Páshá is predicted. And it is said that God would lay hold upon the Sultán. The correspondence between their mistreatment of Bahá'u'lláh and his companions and their actual or predicted fates posited in this tablet recalls the conviction among Sufi leaders that the fates of kings and dynasties depend upon how well they treat the mystic masters, and, of course, it echoes the sermons and newspaper articles of progressive Muslim Ottoman dissidents who also predicted an early end to the reign of Sultán AbdulAzíz. But in going on to specify actual mechanisms for the redress of such injustices, such as adoption of a rule of law, the safeguarding of individual rights, and parliamentary governance, Bahá'u'lláh makes his jeremiads against the Ottoman pharaohs much more than mere theological gloating, imbuing them instead with importance for the history of thinking about human rights and democracy in the modern Middle East.



Comments

September 7. On this date in 1908, Hasan Balyuzi, a Hand of the Cause of God, was born in Shiraz.

submitted29 days ago by A35821363

September 7. On this date in 1908, [Hasan Balyuzi](#), a Hand of the Cause of God, was born in Shiraz.

He was born in 1908 in Shiraz and was an [Afnan](#) from both sides of his family. In 1925, he met Shoghi Effendi while traveling to Lebanon to study at the [American University of Beirut](#), where he was present at the same time as some of his cousins [Munib Shahid](#) and [Soheil Afnan](#). In 1932 Balyuzi went to London where he studied diplomatic history at the London School of Economics. He would make his career as a broadcaster in the [Persian Section of the BBC](#).

In 1933 he was elected as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Great Britain, a post he held until he retired in 1960. He was, later, also a member of the [Auxiliary Board](#) and in 1957 was appointed a [Hand of the Cause of God](#).

In 1941 he married professional ballerina Mary (Molly) Brown with whom he had five sons (Hushang, Robert, Felix, Richard and Simeon).

On February 12, 1980 [Hasan Balyuzi](#) died in London.

On February 15 he was buried at the New Southgate Cemetery, near Shoghi Effendi's grave. On February 12, 2015, Hasan Balyuzi's wish that his enormous collection of papers and books be made available in a research library "for the benefit of all who seek knowledge" was fulfilled with the opening of the [Afnan Library](#).



Comments

September 7. On this date in 1916, Tokujiro Torii, the first blind Japanese to learn Esperanto, wrote 'Abdu'l-Bahá a letter in Esperanto Braille. His letter "was the second letter to be sent from Japan to the Master."

submitted29 days agobyA35821363

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Tokujiro Torii

In Tokyo I had met Tokujiro Torii, who was a student at the Government School for the Blind. There he came to know Mr. Eroshenko and was the first of the blind in Japan to learn Esperanto. In the spring of 1916, he graduated from the school, and was married to a young woman from his home village. Then he became a teacher of a small school for the blind in Ejiri, a town in Shizuoka province. When I first met this blind brother, I felt his spirit was reaching for Light. Before Mr. Eroshenko left Japan in the summer of 1916 to go to Siam he asked me if I would go to Ejiri to help Mr. Torii with Esperanto and, he added, "the Bahá'í Cause." As I had learned to read and write Esperanto Braille, I was corresponding with Mr. Torii in Esperanto. He was editing a journal for the blind, and asked me to collaborate with him and write for it an article about the Bahá'í Revelation, which I was delighted to do. He had written Mr. Eroshenko that he felt a new spirit had come to Japan and he wrote me he felt the Bahá'í Cause would give light to the spirit of the blind people and added, "please guide me."

Mr. Torii had asked me if I would come to Ejiri the last week in August, as Mr. Nakamura, a blind teacher who had spent two years in a school in England, was going to be there then and would interpret for us. On August 22, while in Matsushima, I wrote: "In a few days I will

be with some blind friends who have asked me to visit them. The friend of Mr. Eroshenko's (Mr. Torii) writes me that he is sorry he is only a poor young man and cannot give me the right reception, but, he says, 'I will receive the eternal riches from 'Abdu'l-Bahá and await you with spiritual joy.' At his request I have written about the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, which will be printed in Braille in the Journal for the Blind."

In order to go to Ejiri, I returned to Tokyo. It was exceedingly hot and I became ill. It seemed as though I could not be of help to anyone and even dear Mrs. Augur said she thought 'Abdu'l-Bahá would not want me to go. Perhaps it was God's purpose to empty me of everything that He might use me. When the morning came to go, putting some Bahá'í literature in my suitcase, I went to the train. After a ride of five hours, Mr. and Mrs. Torii and Mr. Nakamura met me at Ejiri and guided me to a Japanese Inn. As Ejiri was a town where no foreigners lived, it was the only place for me to stay. We had a visit and then they left me. Throughout that night there was geisha music and noise in the Inn and I spent a sleepless night. In the morning when the dear friends came I read them from the book *Ten Days in the Light of 'Akká* and other Bahá'í writings. Mr. Nakamura was then teaching in a Christian school for the blind in Tokyo, and was the editor of the only religious journal for the blind in Japan. He asked me if I would write about the Bahá'í Revelation for the blind women of Japan. He said I might be unlimited in the length of my article as nothing had yet been done for the blind women, whom he said had double darkness, that is, of spirit and body. He was devoting his time to try and better the condition of the blind in his land.

When I left Ejiri after a few days spent in reading and explaining the Bahá'í teachings, Mr. Torii told me that he wished to write to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, but he waited for the inspiration to come. On September 7, in the quiet hours of the night the inspiration came. What joy was mine when I received from him a beautiful letter addressed to the Beloved Master, written in Esperanto Braille! He wrote me that after I left, he walked with his Japanese wife in the fields and a great light and happiness came to him. His letter, which was the second letter to be sent from Japan to the Master from a Japanese follows:

Ejiri, Shizuoka, Japan

September 7, 1916.

Lordo de mia spirito!

Nun mi skribas Vin kun spirita gojego, tio ci estas grandega honoro por mi. Mi kredas ke tio kio mi skribas nun al Vi, alportas grandan gojon, spiritan povon kaj fortegon al mi. Mi

petegas Vin ke, Ho mia Spirita Amanto, Vi ciam plunigu mian koron per amo, gojo, paco, spirita lumo kaj eterna espero. Donu al mi la fortegon por ke mi ciam povu ami miajn gefratojn, por ke mi povu labori por alportigi la eternan lumon al miaj karaj samsortanoj, tio estas blinduloj de Japanujo, car mi estas blinda por ke mi povu vidi Vian Belecon!

Dio sendu Lian Lumon, forton kaj benon al mi kaj miaj karaj Japanaj blinduloj. Tio ci estas mia prego kaj deziro al Vi, car miaj samsortaj geamikoj estas ankoraŭ tute en malheleco, ambau en spirito kaj korpo, kiel Vi scias. Sed mi sentas, mi kredas ke la tagigo proksimigas al ni. Bo, ne sekigu la fonton de amo en mia koro. Gvidu nin kune kun Dio. Amu nin per Via Universala Amo, kaj beno nian belan tagigon!

Nia kara fratino, F-ino Aleksandro, visitis antaŭ kelkaj tagoj kaj rakontis min pri Via granda Instruo, kaj donis al mi sian personan influon per kiu mia koro estas sankigita. Si gvidis min en spirita eterna lumo kaj guo, fratine. Mi scias ke Via instruo estas granda lumego por tute homaro. Mi volas penadi per disvastigi tinu ci bonegan sciigajon speciale inter miaj samsortoj, se tio etsus eble por mi. Uzu min kiel Vi volas kaj donu al mi spiritan povon kaj forton por batali en la milito de la universala paco!

Mi kredas ke mi povas ricevi de Vi forton kaj Benon. Estigu akra mian animon por ke mi povu audi Vian Vocon! Mi nenion havas por diri al Vi sed pregon kaj petegon al Vi. Tamen, mi scias ke Vi goje permesas min kaj Vi donas eternan lumon kaj spiritan forton.

Via malgranda servisto

Tokujiro Torii

In an article published in the *Bahá'í World* Vol. IV, Mr. Torii wrote of his spiritual experience thus: "It was a day in August, 1916, that I found the Eternal Light which I had sought and sought with a longing heart for a long time . . . At that time I was living in a town by the seashore . . . There came a messenger of the Kingdom of Abhá and lifted up the veil of my soul. . . . Since that bright morning of my spirit, everything in the world has changed for me."

For the sake of God, I went to Ejiri and He used me for His purpose. Of all the trips I have taken in Japan that one brought the greatest blessing and joy which extended and increased throughout the years spent in that country. It was the door which opened to the blind of Japan Cause of God, bringing them Eternal Life.

Tokujiro Torii was twenty-three years old, and like Mr. Eroshenko, lost his sight when he was three years old from fever. His soul was so ripe that it only needed a touch to set it

aflame. In a letter of September 12, 1916 I wrote: "Mr. Torii is ready to do anything he can for the Cause and is already translating from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words into Japanese. He learned English by listening at an English class for the sighted, but had no English books in Braille. He has no one to read English to him now. His little wife can only spell the words to him, but in this way he reads and translates. As we are planning soon to print a small book of the Bahá'í teachings in Japanese, we will also do the same in Braille for the blind. The donation for this work comes from a dear American brother."

In Tokyo I wrote for Mr. Nakamura the article, in the form of a letter, to the blind women, telling them of the hope and joy they would find in the Bahá'í Message. Mr. Nakamura translated it into Japanese Braille, and published and sent it out from his school. He said that usually the letters from the blind young women were very dull, but after they had read of the Bahá'í Message they became full of life. Several young women wrote of the light and consolation they received from the Bahá'í teachings. Mr. Nakamura kindly translated their letters to me. One of the young women especially found great inspiration and for a time we corresponded. This Braille booklet was not only the first of the Bahá'í teachings to be circulated among the blind in Japan but also the first pamphlet to be published in the Japanese language.

I wrote, "So the spiritual Dawn is surely drawing near for those people."

According the Google Translate, the text of this letter reads as follows...

Lord of my spirit!

Now I write you with spiritual joy, this is a huge honor for me. I believe that what I write now to You brings great joy, spiritual power and strength to me.

I beg you, O my Spiritual Beloved, you will always make my heart wake up with love, grace, peace, spiritual light and eternal hope. Give me the fortune so that I can always love my siblings, so that I can work to bring eternal love to my dear self-esteem, that is blind from Japan, as I am blind so I can see Your Beauty!

God sends His Light, strength and blessing to me and my dear Japanese blinds. This is my prego and my desire to you, since my same friends are still completely in darkness, both in spirit and body, as You know. But I'm sorry, I think the migration is coming to us. Bo, do not dry the source of love in my heart. Lead us together with God. Love us with Your Universal Love, and bless our beautiful dying!

Our dear sister, Miss Alexander, visited a few days ago and told me about Your great teachings, and gave me his personal influence through which my heart was sanctioned. If you guided me in spiritual eternal light and guo, sister. I know that Your teaching is a great light for all humanity. I want to try to spread you with a good news, especially in my case, if this may be possible for me. Use me as Thou wilt, and give me spiritual power and strength to fight in the war of universal peace!

I believe that I can get from you strength and blessing. Let my soul be sharpened so that I may hear Your Voice! I have nothing to tell you but prayer and supplication to you. However, I know that You gently allow me and You give eternal light and spiritual strength.

Your little servant

On February 12, 1913, 'Abdu'l-Bahá' had addressed the Paris Esperanto Society where he stated "everyone of us must study this language and make every effort to spread it so that each day it may receive a wider recognition, be accepted by all nations and governments of the world and become a part of the curriculum in all the public schools."

'Abdu'l-Bahá's February 12, 1913 talk to the Paris Esperanto Society, was [reported in the "Star of the West" magazine...](#)

Praise be to God, that Dr Zamenhof has created the Esperanto language. It has all the potential qualities of universal adoption. All of us must be grateful and thankful to him for his noble effort, for in this matter he has served his fellowmen well. He has constructed a language which will bestow divine benefits on all peoples. With untiring efforts and self-sacrifice on the part of its devotees it gives promise of universal acceptance. Therefore **everyone of us must study this language and make every effort to spread it so that each day it may receive a wider recognition, be accepted by all nations and governments of the world and become a part of the curriculum in all the public schools. I hope that the business of the future conferences and congresses will be carried on in Esperanto. In the future two languages will be taught in the schools, one the native tongue, the other the international auxiliary language.** Consider today how difficult is human communication. One may study 50 languages and yet travel through a country and still be at a loss. I, myself, know several of the Oriental languages, but know no Western tongue. Had this universal language pervaded the globe, I should have studied it and you would have been directly informed of my thoughts and I of yours and a special friendship would have been established between us.

Please send some teachers to Persia, if you can, so that they may teach Esperanto to the young people. I have written asking some of them to come here to study it. I hope that it will be promulgated very rapidly - then the world of humanity will find eternal peace; all the nations will associate with one another like mothers and sisters, fathers and brothers, and each individual member of the body politic will be fully informed of the thoughts of all

This talk was also covered in [J.E. Esselmont's](#) book *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* quotes 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the chapter entitled *Universal Language*:

At an Esperanto banquet given in Paris in February 1913, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said:—

Today one of the chief causes of the differences in Europe is the diversity of languages. We say this man is a German, the other is an Italian, then we meet an Englishman and then again a Frenchman. Although they belong to the same race, yet language is the greatest barrier between them. Were a universal auxiliary language in operation they would all be considered as one.

His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh wrote about this international language more than forty years ago. He says that as long as an international language is not adopted, complete union between the various sections of the world will be unrealized, for we observe that misunderstandings keep people from mutual association, and these misunderstandings will not be dispelled except through an international auxiliary language.

Generally speaking, the whole people of the Orient are not fully informed of events in the West, neither can the Westerners put themselves in sympathetic touch with the Easterners; their thoughts are enclosed in a casket—the international language will be the master key to open it. Were we in possession of a universal language, the Western books could easily be translated into that language, and the Eastern peoples be informed of their contents. In the same way the books of the East could be translated into that language for the benefit of the people in the West. The greatest means of progress towards the union of East and West will be a common language. It will make the whole world one home and become the strongest impulse for human advancement. It will upraise the standard of the oneness of humanity. It will make the earth one universal commonwealth. It will be the cause of love between the children of men. It will cause good fellowship between the various races.

Now, praise be to God that Dr. Zamenhof has invented the Esperanto language. It has all the potential qualities of becoming the international means of communication. All of us must be grateful and thankful to him for this noble effort; for in this

way he has served his fellowmen well. With untiring effort and self-sacrifice on the part of its devotees Esperanto will become universal. Therefore every one of us must study this language and spread it as far as possible so that day by day it may receive a broader recognition, be accepted by all nations and governments of the world, and become a part of the curriculum in all the public schools. I hope that Esperanto will be adopted as the language of all the future international conferences and congresses, so that all people need acquire only two languages—one their own tongue and the other the international language. Then perfect union will be established between all the people of the world. Consider how difficult it is today to communicate with various nations. If one studies fifty languages one may yet travel through a country and not know the language. Therefore I hope that you will make the utmost effort, so that this language of Esperanto may be widely spread.

In the past, Bahá'ís were more active in learning and encouraging the learning of Esperanto, and the links between Esperanto and the Bahá'í Faith are numerous. [Ehsan Yarshater](#), the ex-Bahá'í founder and editor of *Encyclopedia Iranica*, notes how as a child in Iran he learned and taught Esperanto and that when his mother was visiting Haifa he wrote her a letter in Persian as well as Esperanto. L.L. Zamenhof's daughter, [Lidia Zamenhof](#) was a convert to the Bahá'í Faith. At the request of 'Abdu'l-Baha, [Agnes Baldwin Alexander](#) became an early advocate of Esperanto and used it to spread the Bahá'í teachings at meetings and conferences in Japan.

Due to the failure of Esperanto to gain significant traction, however, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's statements have been backtracked, such that [Shoghi Effendi](#) said

Regarding the subject of Esperanto; it should be made clear to the believers that **while the teaching of that language has been repeatedly encouraged by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, there is no reference either from Him or from Bahá'u'lláh that can make us believe that it will necessarily develop into the international auxiliary language of the future.** Bahá'u'lláh has specified in His Writings that such a language will either have to be chosen from one of the existing languages, or an entirely new one should be created to serve as a medium of exchange between the nations and peoples of the world. Pending this final choice, the Bahá'ís are advised to study Esperanto only in consideration of the fact that the learning of this language can considerably facilitate intercommunication between individuals, groups and Assemblies throughout the Bahá'í world in the present stage of the evolution of the Faith.



Comments

September 7. On this date in 1962, the Custodians addressed a letter to the Hands of Cause of God about "the activities of the supporters of Mason Remey in Latin America."

submitted29 days agobyA35821363

September 7. On this date in 1962, the Custodians addressed [a letter](#) to the Hands of Cause of God about "the activities of the supporters of Mason Remey in Latin America."

To the Hands of the Cause of God

Since our last letter to you, news has reached us of the **activities of the supporters of [Mason Remey](#) in Latin America. A cablegram was received from the National Spiritual Assembly of Chile informing us that Fabienne Guillon, long-time member of the Chilean and Regional Assembly, and the other members of the Local Assembly of Loncoche, Chile, had accepted the claims of Remey.**

[Mas'úd Khamsí](#), Auxiliary Board member for Protection and a former member of the Regional Assembly which included Chile, was sent immediately to the spot by the Hands in the Western Hemisphere, following an exchange of cables with the World Centre. The National Assembly of Chile was cabled to have all the friends refrain from association with Guillon and other affected persons until a full investigation can be made. We are following the agreed steps of meeting and trying to save these people before expelling them from the Faith, in case all, or some, of them because of their inexperience, lack of sufficient knowledge of [Covenant-breaking or Covenant-breakers](#), may have been unduly influenced and will renounce such baseless claims once the situation is clear to them.

This new flare-up has come apparently as a result of Bernardo Fillon returning to South America from France. The National Spiritual Assembly of Chile wrote us a letter which arrived after their cable about Loncoche telling us that Fillon was there trying to influence the friends. It now seems fairly apparent that following a meeting in France, some of the

key-conspirators of [Mason Remey](#) have gone out to renew their efforts to damage the Cause and undermine the faith of the friends.

Therefore, the things we shared with you in our recent letter concerning the application of the beloved Guardian's [cable of June 4, 1957](#) to all the Continental Hands and National Spiritual Assemblies becomes even more urgent and vital. **We must all redouble our vigilance and intensify our efforts to combat the spread of their evil influence wherever we find it.**

We are preparing a letter to all National Spiritual Assemblies on this subject, and the significance of that [June 4, 1957 cable](#) of Shoghi Effendi. We are sending a special letter to Latin America including the above, but also giving them some background to share with the friends on the significance of [Covenant-breaking](#) so they will be better able to resist their insidious efforts.

We have asked dear [Varqá](#) to go to France to help strengthen that Community and to consult with the National Spiritual Assembly. He is there now and will remain for fifteen days. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánúm arrives in the World Centre Sunday from Europe. [Faizí](#) reports thrilling victories and wonderful news of his visit, to Bolivia, and also comments strongly on the grave general weakness of many Latin American areas. Leroy goes to America on personal business, after his trip to Europe where he has visited the summer schools and made valuable visits to National Spiritual Assemblies of the Scandinavian countries and Germany. [Muhájir](#) is here at present, and is lending his valuable help to our consultations.

There has also been a wonderful flow of good news from the Bahá'í world. [The Prime Minister of Uganda](#) and his Personal Secretary, accompanied by the Director of Public Relations from the Israel Foreign Office with the possible future Israeli Ambassador to Uganda visited the Shrine of the Báb. [The Prime Minister, Apollo Milton Obote](#) was our guest of honour at a luncheon in the House of the Master. This is for your information as it will appear later in the News Letter from the International Council.

News of additional victories in the [Philippines](#) has reached us. They have increased their number to 2,000 believers. Since Ridván they have doubled their centres to nearly 200. Among the new believers are members from four different tribes.

The teaching victories continue also in the Indian sub-continent, Africa and Bolivia. Dear Enoch, accompanied by Auxiliary Board member [Max Kenyerezi](#), has arrived this week in

die Congo and we are confident that ever-greater victories will be forthcoming from that fruitful area, following the success of his trips to Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda.

We would be grateful for any news that you may have which might indicate increased activities by the enemies in your area, so that we may anticipate and minimize them.

We are all visiting the Shrine of the Blessed Beauty this afternoon, and will remember you in our prayers, and shall supplicate alt. that sacred Thresh-old that even greater victories may flood the earth during these precious, rapidly passing hours of [our beloved Guardian's glorious Crusade](#).

With warmest Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND



Comments

September 8. On this date in 1916, the "Star of the West" magazine published the first five of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's "Tablets of the Divine Plan."

submitted29 days ago by A35821363

September 8. On this date in 1916, the *Star of the West* magazine published the first five of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's *Tablets of the Divine Plan*.

On December 23, 1918, 'Abdu'l-Bahá sent his secretary [Ahmad Sohrab](#) to the United States to personally deliver the *Tablets of the Divine Plan*. These collective letters, along with Bahá'u'lláh's *Tablet of Carmel* and 'Abdu'l-Bahá's *Will and Testament* were described by Shoghi Effendi as "three of the Charters" of the Bahá'í Faith, which along with the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* (which Shoghi Effendi described as "the basic laws and ordinances on which the fabric of His future *World Order* must rest") set the foundation of the *Administrative Order*. [Ahmad Sohrab](#) would later be declared a Covenant-breaker by Shoghi Effendi.



Comments

September 8. On this date in 1919, subsequent to the British occupation of Palestine, at a time when tens of thousands of Jewish settlers were arriving under the auspices of the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association, an article in the "Star of the West" quoted 'Abdu'l-Bahá praising Zionism.

submitted29 days agobyA35821363

September 8. On this date in 1919, subsequent to the British occupation of Palestine, at a time when tens of thousands of Jewish settlers were arriving under the auspices of the [Palestine Jewish Colonization Association](#), an article in the "Star of the West" quoted 'Abdu'l-Bahá [praising the Zionist movement](#), proclaiming that "There is too much talk today of what the Zionists are going to do here. There is no need of it. Let them come and do more and say less" and that "A Jewish government might come later."

On February 23, 1914, at the eve of World War I, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [had hosted](#) Baron [Edmond James de Rothschild](#), a member of the [Rothschild banking family](#) who was a leading [advocate and financier](#) of the Zionist movement, during one of his early trips to Palestine.

On January 24, 1922, Shoghi Effendi [received a letter](#) from [Herbert Samuel](#), the British High Commissioner for Palestine. The receipt of the letter is mentioned in [Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum's *The Priceless Pearl*](#). As High Commissioner, Herbert Samuel was the first Jew to govern the historic land of Israel in 2,000 years, and his appointment was regarded by the [Muslim-Christian Associations](#) as the "first step in formation of Zionist national home in the midst of Arab people." Herbert Samuel welcomed the arrival of Jewish settlers under the auspices of the [Palestine Jewish Colonization Association](#) and recognised Hebrew as one of the three official languages of the Mandate territory

While Shoghi Effendi was thus occupied and was gathering his powers and beginning to write letters such as these to the Bahá'ís in different countries, he received the following letter from the High Commissioner for Palestine, Sir Herbert Samuel, dated 24 January 1922:

Dear Mr. Rabbani,

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of Jan. 16., and to thank you for the kind expression it contains. It would be unfortunate if the ever to be lamented death of Sir 'Abdu'l-Bahá were to interfere with the completion of your Oxford career, and I hope that may not be the case. I am much interested to learn of the measures that have been taken to provide for the stable organization of the Bahá'í Movement. Should you be at any time in Jerusalem in would be a pleasure to me to see you here.

Yours sincerely,

[Herbert Samuel](#)



Comments

September 8. On this date in 1964, the UHJ wrote "the beloved Guardian was not only a translator but the inspired Interpreter of the Holy Writings; thus, where a passage in Persian or Arabic could give rise to two different expressions in English he would know which one to convey."

submitted29 days agobyA35821363

September 8. On this date in 1964, the Universal House of Justice [wrote](#) "the beloved Guardian was not only a translator but the inspired Interpreter of the Holy Writings; thus, where a passage in Persian or Arabic could give rise to two different expressions in English he would know which one to convey. Similarly he would be much better equipped than an average translator to know which metaphor to employ in English to express a Persian metaphor which might be meaningless in literal translation"; reminding his words "'this English translation' of a Text should form the 'basis' for translations into other European languages...speakers of other European tongues will obtain a more accurate translation by following the Guardian's English translation than by attempting at this stage in Bahá'í history to translate directly from the original"; but adding "translations into Oriental languages such as Turkish and Urdu could be made directly from the original texts."

The Universal House of Justice

Bahá'í World Centre

Department of the Secretariat

16 September 1992

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The questions contained in your letter to ... about the language of Revelation and the status of Shoghi Effendi's translations were referred to the Universal House of Justice. We are instructed to convey the following response.

With respect to your inquiry about whether, in the Bahá'í context, English might possibly be regarded as a language of Revelation, the House of Justice asks us to explain that, while **Shoghi Effendi's translations of the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh into English carry with them a large measure of interpretation of the intent and purpose of the Author of the text -- an interpretation which he, as Interpreter of the Sacred Text, could alone authoritatively provide** -- one should not conclude that the English language into which the Writings were translated could, therefore, be considered as a language of Revelation.

As to the special status of Shoghi Effendi's translations, the beloved Guardian in a letter dated 15 November 1956 written on his behalf specified that **"this English translation" of a Text should form the "basis" for translations into other European languages**. The Universal House of Justice, in **a letter of 8 September 1964 underlined the uniqueness of the translations of Shoghi Effendi and provided the following elucidation:**

...the beloved Guardian was not only a translator but the inspired Interpreter of the Holy Writings; thus, where a passage in Persian or Arabic could give rise to two different expressions in English he would know which one to convey. Similarly he would be much better equipped than an average translator to know which metaphor to employ in English to express a Persian metaphor which might be meaningless in literal translation.

Thus, in general, **speakers of other European tongues will obtain a more accurate translation by following the Guardian's English translation than by attempting at this stage in Bahá'í history to translate directly from the original.**

This does not mean, however, that the translators should not also check their translation with the original texts if they are familiar with Persian or Arabic. There may be many instances where the exact meaning of the English text is unclear to them and this can be made evident by comparison with the original....

The Universal House of Justice has also clarified that while the English translations of the Guardian might serve as a useful resource, **translations into Oriental languages such as Turkish and Urdu could be made directly from the original texts.**

September 8. On this date in 1968, one month after the Palermo Conference, the UHJ addressed a letter titled "All May Share Laurels of Accomplishment" noting "Those who cannot pioneer or do travel teaching will want to participate by contributing to the International Deputization Fund."

submitted29 days agobyA35821363

September 8. On this date in 1968, one month after the [First Bahá'í Oceanic Conference in Palermo](#), the Universal House of Justice addressed [a letter](#) to all Bahá'ís titled "[All May Share Laurels of Accomplishment](#)" noting "Those who cannot [pioneer](#) or do travel teaching will want to participate by contributing to the [International Deputization Fund](#)."

All May Share Laurels of Accomplishment

The [glorious conference in Palermo](#) concluded with a burst of eager enthusiasm of determined and dedicated believers who have pledged to do their part in winning the remaining goals of the [Nine Year Plan](#). More than 125 offered to [pioneer](#) and more than 100 volunteered to do travel teaching. In addition, **there was a generous outpouring of material resources to finance teaching projects. Had the entire Bahá'í world been able to participate in [the Mediterranean conference](#), we have no doubt that all the goals would be quickly won.**

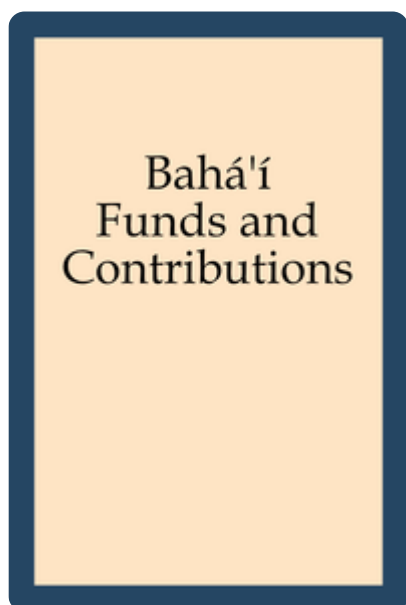
With this in mind, we wish to impress upon the friends who could not attend the conference, and who will surely — through reports and personal contact with those who did — sense the enthusiasm generated there, that all believers have the privilege to share in the pioneering work, in the travel teaching program, and in **contributing to the Fund**.

We announced at the conference that **the [International Deputization Fund](#), so far used to aid pioneering and travel teaching on an international level, will henceforth be available to assist such projects on the national level in those areas where support is vitally important to the winning of the goals of the [Nine Year Plan](#).** We are concerned that, although we are now approaching the midway point of the [Plan](#), we must yet form an additional 6,997 local spiritual assemblies (76% of the goal), and take the Faith to over 22,800 new localities (59% of the goal). Obviously, hundreds of pioneers and traveling teachers will be required, many of whom will serve in their own countries.

Those who cannot pioneer or do travel teaching will want to participate by contributing to the [International Deputization Fund](#). Let them remember Bahá'u'lláh's injunction: "Center your energies in the propagation of the Faith of God. Whoso is worthy of so high a calling, let him arise and promote it. Whoso is unable, it is his duty to appoint him who will, in his stead, proclaim this Revelation . . ." Let the Bahá'ís of the world join in the true spirit of universal participation and win all the victories while there is yet time. Let each assume his full measure of responsibility that all may share the laurels of accomplishment at the end of the Plan.

Our fervent prayer is that this one hundredth anniversary of the final banishment of Bahá'u'lláh will mark a significant turning point in the fortunes of the [Nine Year Plan](#).

September 8, 1968



Comments

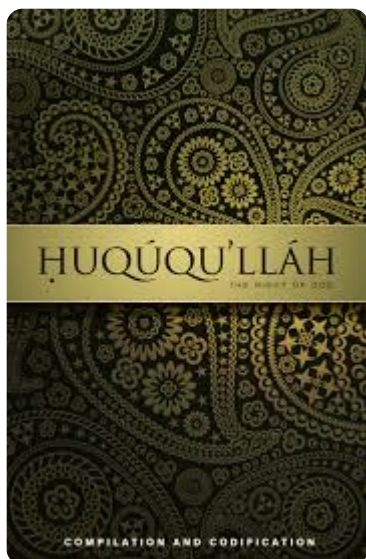
September 8. On this date in 1999, the UHJ wrote "As to the specific concern that prompted your inquiry, the use of funds from Huqúqu'lláh, the disbursement of which is entirely at the discretion of the Head of the Faith, entails a wide range of applications that will eventually address ..."

submitted29 days agobyA35821363

September 8. On this date in 1999, the UHJ [wrote](#) "As to the specific concern that prompted your inquiry, the use of funds from Huqúqu'lláh, the disbursement of which is entirely at the discretion of the Head of the Faith, entails a wide range of applications that will eventually address various needs of society in ways that will also contribute toward the solution of economic problems. However, it is much too early in the worldwide observance of the Law, and is not possible in the current state of the Bahá'í community or of society, for the House of Justice to elaborate on these details. For the time being, the Huqúqu'lláh is used principally for the work of the Bahá'í community, which, of course, includes its initial efforts at social and economic development."

As to the specific concern that prompted your inquiry, the use of funds from Huqúqu'lláh, the disbursement of which is entirely at the discretion of the Head of the Faith, entails a wide range of applications that will eventually address various needs of society in ways that will also contribute toward the solution of economic problems. However, it is much too early in the worldwide observance of the Law, and is not possible in the current state of the Bahá'í community or of society, for the House of Justice to elaborate on these details. For the time being, the Huqúqu'lláh is used principally for the work of the Bahá'í community, which, of course, includes its initial efforts at social and economic development.

(8 September 1999, written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)



Comments

September 9. On this date in 1911, an article in the Boston Evening Transcript introduced "'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbas, the mysterious Persian prophet of the Bahá'í religion, which has, at a moderate estimate, three million followers."

submitted29 days agobyA35821363

September 9. On this date in 1911, [an article](#) in the Boston Evening Transcript introduced "'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbas, the mysterious Persian prophet of **the Bahá'í religion, which has, at a moderate estimate, three million followers.**"

[High Priest of the Bahá'í Religion, Numbering 3,000,000 Followers, Is 'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbas](#)
London, Sept. 9 — **'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbas, the mysterious Persian prophet of the Bahá'í religion, which has, at a moderate estimate, three million followers,** will make a short stay in London, and meet his English adherents.

This present journey is the first 'Abdu'l-Bahá has ventured among Western people. He is the third prophet of the Bahá'ís. The first was Mirza Ali Mohammad, known as the Báb, born in 1819, in Shiraz, a city of Persia, who founded the great Bahá'í religious movement, and was shot at Tabriz, six years after he declared his mission. The mantle of the Báb descended upon a Persian nobleman, the second prophet, who became known as Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God. He spent most of his years in banishment from Persia and in prison.

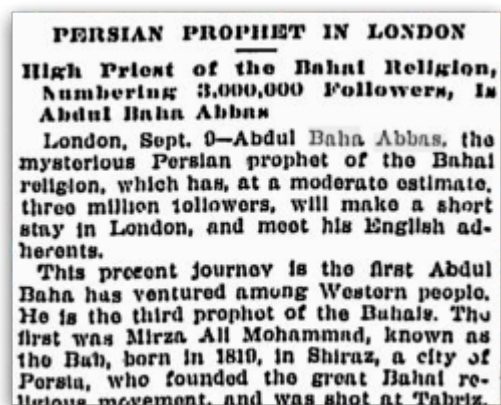
'Abdu'l-Bahá is the son of Bahá'u'lláh. Born in prison at Acre, he assumed the leadership of the religious body, on the death of his father in 1892. So rapidly has the religion gained strength that now a third of the Persian people are converts to the Bahá'í faith, and there are many believers in Egypt, India, the United States, France, and England. In the early days of the teaching its followers met with much violent persecution at the hands of their fellow

Persian countrymen, and there are records showing that twenty thousand were massacred at different periods.

The Bahá'í faith has been likened to a spiritual Esperanto. "It is a world movement," said the editor of the Christian Commonwealth yesterday, who has received a telegram of greeting from 'Abdu'l-Bahá. "The characteristic of Bahá'ism is that it seeks to demonstrate the fundamental unity of all religions, and to trace them all to one single divine source. They seek to unite all faiths and religions as one."

In London 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the chief of the faith, should attract a large amount of public attention by his personal appearance alone. He is described by an English convert, who has lived at his house at Acre, as tall, with a slow, dignified carriage and kingly presence. His beard is long and white.

His snowy hair he wears doubled below a turban, which surmounts a strong clear-cut face, in which a pair of clear blue eyes are set below heavy eyebrows. The dress he dons is usually gray in color, a flowing tunic robe made of cotton, and sandals. Converts say that when present with him one does not want to talk, it is sufficient just to sit before him, and that his eloquence in addresses is beyond description. He speaks, however, in Persian, as his knowledge of English is limited to a few words.



Comments

September 9. On this date in 1950, a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to Glasgow Bahá'ís stated "he feels the Cause will find many exemplary and wonderful servants among the Scotch people...thus gradually free the devoted pioneers...for services in new and maybe distant fields."

submitted29 days agobyA35821363

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9 September 1950

To the Glasgow Bahá'ís

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Your letter dated 5.7.50 has been received, and the beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

The progress being made in spreading the Faith in Scotland pleases him immensely, and he feels the Cause will find many exemplary and wonderful servants among the Scotch people. They may be slow to be convinced, but once they embrace a thing they do so with full conviction and great determination to serve their belief.

He will pray that your assembly may confirm many new souls, and thus gradually free the devoted pioneers, who went there to teach, for services in new and maybe distant fields.

You may be sure he deeply appreciates all you have done.

With loving greetings,

[From the Guardian:]

Dear co-workers,

I was so pleased and grateful to receive your most welcome message, and I profoundly appreciate the noble sentiments you have expressed. I wish to assure you that I will pray for your success from the depths of my heart, that the Beloved may guide your steps, bless your high endeavours, and enable you to lend a tremendous impetus to the spread of the Faith in Scotland.

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Comments

September 9. On this date in 2006, "an author directly affected by the recent action of the National Spiritual Assembly regarding material marketed by Kalimát Press" addressed an email to the UHJ. The UHJ "upholds its decision in the matter" given the NSA's "disagreeing with Kalimát's agenda."

submitted29 days agobyA35821363

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24 November 2006

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

Your email letter dated 9 September 2006 has reached the Bahá'í World Centre and the Universal House of Justice has asked us to convey the following reply.

As you are an author directly affected by the recent action of the National Spiritual Assembly regarding material marketed by Kalimát Press, your concern is well appreciated.

The copy you sent to the House of Justice of your email letter addressed to ___ dated 2 November 2006 indicates that you have reconciled yourself to that decision, which was actually initiated by the National Spiritual Assembly itself; and the House of Justice has taken cognizance of your expression therein of loyalty and obedience. Even so, it feels that

the main questions you have raised deserve an explanatory response. **The reason the National Assembly gave you for having “taken the step of terminating institutional support” of Kalimát Press, as quoted in your letter, succinctly states the case. ... The House of Justice understands that the National Assembly felt there was no choice but to opt for the action it took. Finding that the National Assembly is justified in the conclusion it has reached, the House of Justice upholds its decision in the matter.**

Clearly, then, this is not just about a few titles. In reality, nothing has been done against any specific title or author. Bahá'ís are free to purchase and read any titles they choose, whether by Bahá'í or other authors. Kalimát Press's books are readily available directly from its address or from other distributors. **The National Assembly, having no obligation to distribute the books of independent publishers, and disagreeing with Kalimát's agenda, has simply decided that its agencies will not carry the books of that publisher. You express concern that the Assembly's action may be used by those who wish to disparage the Faith.** The House of Justice is of the opinion that this can be done only if the facts of the matter are distorted.

It is very much to be regretted that well-meaning writers like yourself are caught up in this situation, and the House of Justice sympathizes with you. In your case, the featuring of your work on Alain Locke in a recent issue of World Order, a periodical sponsored by the National Spiritual Assembly, should indicate to you that your contribution to Bahá'í literature is highly regarded. **The predicament in which Kalimát's behavior has put you and other authors of the good books it publishes will no doubt be overcome with the passage of time.** You have only to be wisely patient until it becomes clear what course of action you may follow.

The House of Justice appreciates the spirit in which you wrote to it and will remember you and your family in its supplications at the Holy Threshold.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat

cc: National Assembly of the United States



Comments

September 12. On this date in 1950, Shoghi Effendi wrote "My anguished heart...But for America's multitudinous services and unparalleled record of achievements my burden of cares both past and present would be unbearable...added weight of afflictions oppressing me at this hour."

submitted25 days agobyA35821363

September 12. On this date in 1950, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#) "My anguished heart...But for America's multitudinous services and unparalleled record of achievements my burden of cares both past and present would be unbearable...added weight of afflictions oppressing me at this hour...such tribulations enabling me to taste the cup the Martyr-Prophet of our beloved Faith drained so heroically a hundred years ago."

September 12, 1950 Comforted by Messages of Devotion **My anguished heart** is comforted by the unnumbered messages from communities, assemblies, groups, committees and individual American believers, replete with expressions of loving devotion, pledges of loyalty to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Covenant, prayers on my behalf and assurances of rededication in service to the precious Faith.

The triple cord binding me to the American Community, outstanding in its affectionate and unfailing support in the course of my almost thirty years' stewardship to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, is greatly reinforced. **But for America's multitudinous services and unparalleled record of achievements my burden of cares both past and present would be unbearable.**

Far from complaining of the **added weight of afflictions oppressing me at this hour** I feel I cannot but welcome with feelings of thankfulness and humility **such tribulations en-**

abling me to taste the cup the Martyr-Prophet of our beloved Faith drained so heroically a hundred years ago.

Much as I desire to acknowledge separately all messages I regretfully find the task beyond the limits of my overtaxed strength. I ask, dearly beloved friends, to regard this message as addressed to each one personally, bearing to each and every one assurance of my constant awareness of their enfolding love and unfailing support as well as my everlasting gratitude and unalterable affection and immense pride in their unrivaled collective share in the world-wide furtherance of the Cause so dear, so precious to us all.



Comments

September 13. On this date in 1885, Alain Leroy Locke was born. He was the father of the Harlem Renaissance, a Bahá'í, and an open homosexual who called his sexual orientation his "vulnerable/invulnerability," viewing it as a risk but also his strength.

submitted24 days ago by A35821363

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Comments

September 13. On this date in 1927, George Jacob Augur died. An early American Bahá'í who converted in Hawaii, he was the first Bahá'í to pioneer to Japan and was named a Disciple of 'Abdu'l-Bahá by Shoghi Effendi.

submitted24 days agobyA35821363

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[George Jacob Augur](#) was born on October 1, 1853, to Abraham Augur, a farmer, and Ellen Morris in West Haven Connecticut. He attended Hopkins Grammar School, then Yale Preparatory School, and then studied at Yale University Medical College from 1876 to 1879. After graduating he worked at New Haven State Hospital until 1882, when he moved to Oakland, California where he worked as an allopathic physician until 1895 when he began practicing homeopathy, alienating him from the medical community.

He married [Ruth Barstow Dyer](#) in 1892 and they had a son, [Morris Curtis](#), who was born March 1, 1894. In 1898 the family relocated to Honolulu, Hawaii, where George opened a practice. Ruth's sister who also lived in Honolulu became a Bahá'í in 1905, and George and Ruth also declared between 1907 and 1909 and began holding weekly meetings to teach the Faith in their home. George began correspondence with 'Abdu'l-Bahá after declaring and received six letters from him receiving the first in 1909. George became Treasurer of the Honolulu Bahá'í community in 1911.

In 1913 George wrote that he wished to go to Japan to 'Abdu'l-Bahá having spent time there on a holiday with Ruth in 1906. He received the following Tablet in reply:

"O thou dear son! From thy letter the fragrance of the rose garden of significances was inhaled, that praise be to God, thou art assisted by the Divine confirmations, hast found the way to the Kingdom of God and thy heart and soul are quickened. Arise thou to perform the blessed intention thou art holding and travel thou to Japan and lay there the foundation of the Cause of God, that is, summon the people to the Kingdom of God. Japan has great capacity, but there needs be a teacher who will speak by the confirmations of the Holy Spirit. I hope thou wilt become assisted in this."

He lived in Japan from June 1914 to April 1915, and returned in early 1916 with his wife and lived in [Zushi](#) until 1917. They returned to Japan a final time in 1918 and stayed there until returning to Honolulu in 1919. The Augurs continued to host meetings in their home in Honolulu from 1919 to 1927 when they moved to a beach apartment in Waikiki.

[Augur](#) died due to a stroke on September 13, 1927, and was buried in Oahu Cemetery in Honolulu. Shoghi Effendi conveyed the following message after his death:

"He was deeply grieved to hear of the death of [Dr. Augur](#). He prays that in seeking eternal rest, his soul may soar to heavenly kingdoms and attain an everlasting bounty. Surely he is now where he would much love to be. Please convey to his family Shoghi Effendi's deepest sympathy and regret."

[Here](#) is an article about [George Jacob Augur](#) from [The Bahá'í Encyclopedia Project](#).



Comments

September 13. On this date in 1962, the Custodians wrote about several NSAs' "urging the members of their community to use the Long Obligatory Prayer," noting "we feel that your National Assembly has exceeded the powers given to it in the Administrative Order."

submitted24 days ago by A35821363

September 13. On this date in 1962, the Custodians [wrote](#) about several National Spiritual Assemblies' "urging the members of their community to use the [Long Obligatory Prayer](#)," noting "we feel that your National Assembly has exceeded the powers given to it in the [Administrative Order](#)."

To the Hands of the Cause of God

September 13, 1962

Dear Fellow-Hands,

We have noticed in the minutes of several National Assemblies that they are **urging the members of their community to use the [Long Obligatory Prayer](#)**. We consider this is neither part of the function of a National Assembly nor in accordance with the spirit of the teachings of the Faith, for the reasons given in the following letter sent to the New Zealand National Assembly:

We have noticed in your minutes of 26-27 May that you decided to encourage the friends to use the [Long Obligatory Prayer](#).

In taking this action, we feel that **your National Assembly has exceeded the powers given to it in the [Administrative Order](#)**, insofar as Bahá'u'lláh left the believers

entirely free to choose between the three obligatory prayers. Further He said: "To chant but one verse with joy and gladness is better for you than reading all the Revelations of the Omnipotent God with carelessness."

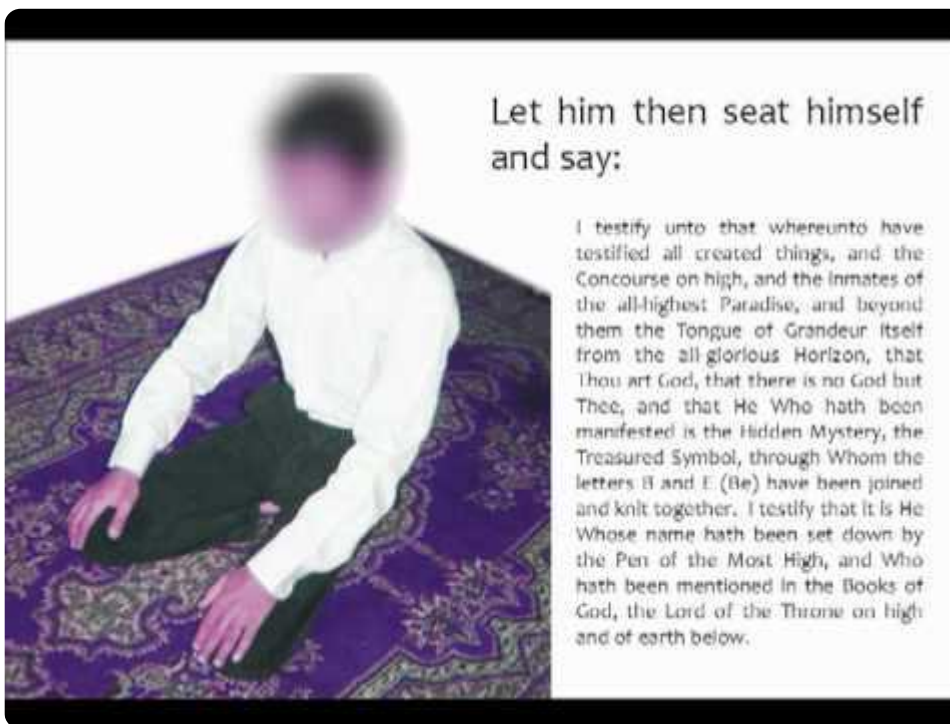
No pressure should be put upon the believers to say one of the three prayers rather than another. If a believer feels inclined to say the long prayer he should say it, and if for some reason he prefers one of the others he is quite free to say this instead.

We feel the Hands should use their influence to prevent such pressures, that are not in accordance with the law of Bahá'u'lláh, being put upon the believers.

With Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND



Comments

September 13. On this date in 1968, an individual wrote the UHJ "making inquiry about instructions which may apply to organ transplants such as the heart or kidney." The UHJ replied "the Universal House of Justice does not wish to make any statements on these points at this time."

submitted24 days agobyA35821363

September 13. On this date in 1968, an individual [wrote](#) the Universal House of Justice "making inquiry about instructions which may apply to organ transplants such as the heart or kidney." The Universal House of Justice replied "We have not come across anything specific in the writings on transplants of hearts and other organs or regarding the time of death, and the Universal House of Justice does not wish to make any statements on these points at this time."

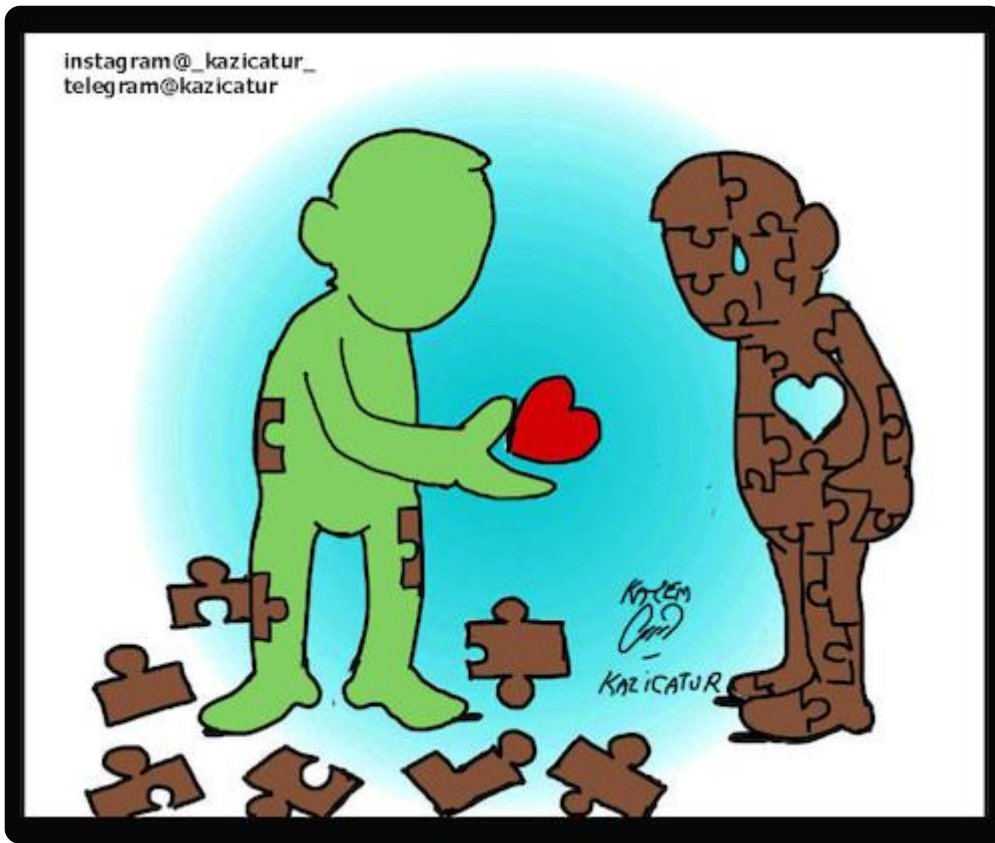
[983. Heart/Kidney Transplant](#)

"We have your letter of September 13, 1968, making inquiry about instructions which may apply to organ transplants such as the heart or kidney.

"On 18 September, 1968, we wrote to the National Spiritual Assembly of Argentina as follows:

'We have not come across anything specific in the writings on transplants of hearts and other organs or regarding the time of death, and the Universal House of Justice does not wish to make any statements on these points at this time.'"

(From a letter of the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, September 23, 1968)



Comments

September 13. On this date in 1983, the UHJ cabled all NSAs regarding the Iranian government's banning the Bahá'í Administration on August 29, 1983, noting the government's statement permitted Bahá'ís to "practice beliefs as private individuals provided they do not teach or invite others to ..."

submitted24 days agobyA35821363

September 13. On this date in 1983, the Universal House of Justice sent a [cable](#) to all National Spiritual Assemblies regarding the Iranian government's banning the [Bahá'í Administration](#) on August 29, 1983, noting the government's statement permitted Bahá'ís to "practice beliefs as private individuals provided they do not teach or invite others to join (the) Faith, they do not form [Assemblies](#) or have anything to do with Administration. Serving in Bahá'í Administration now specified as criminal act."

To all National Spiritual Assemblies

SORELY TRIED COMMUNITY GREATEST NAME IRAN HAS IN RECENT DAYS SUSTAINED YET ANOTHER CRUEL BLOW OPENING NEW CHAPTER ITS TURBULENT HISTORY. ON 29 AUGUST IN UNPRECEDENTED MOVE REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT THROUGH STATEMENT ISSUED ATTORNEY-GENERAL ANNOUNCED BAN [Bahá'í ADMINISTRATION](#), RECITING USUAL FALSE ACCUSATIONS STATING EXISTENCE [ADMINISTRATION](#) OFFICIALLY CONSIDERED TO BE AGAINST LAWS CONSTITUTION COUNTRY. HOWEVER STATEMENT SAID BAHÁ'IS MAY PRACTICE BELIEFS AS PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS PROVIDED THEY DO NOT TEACH OR INVITE OTHERS TO JOIN FAITH, THEY DO NOT FORM [ASSEMBLIES](#) OR HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH [ADMINISTRATION](#). SERVING IN [Bahá'í ADMINISTRATION](#) NOW SPECIFIED AS CRIMINAL ACT THIS LATEST ONSLAUGHT DEFENSELESS COMMUNITY

CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES IMPLACABILITY FANATICAL ELEMENTS IN THEIR DRIVE SUPPRESS LIGHT GOD'S INFANT FAITH IN LAND ITS FIRST GLEAMING. IN CONFORMITY PRINCIPLE LOYALTY OBEDIENCE GOVERNMENT NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY IRAN IMMEDIATELY TOOK ACTION DISSOLVE [BAHA'I ADMINISTRATION](#) THROUGHOUT COUNTRY THUS UPHOLDING INTEGRITY COMMUNITY DESPITE HEAVY YOKE CRUELITIES BORNE BY ITS MEMBERS FOR SEVERAL GENERATIONS. CONFIDENT THAT STEADFAST TRIED AND DEVOTED FRIENDS THAT LONG AGITATED LAND WILL FACE NEW SITUATION WITH RADIANT FORTITUDE. AT SAME TIME BAHAI'S ELSEWHERE ENJOYING FREEDOM PRACTICE FAITH ACUTELY CHALLENGED TO VINDICATE BY THEIR RECONSECRATION TO IMMEDIATE SACRED TASKS UNABATED SUFFERING THEIR GRIEVOUSLY WRONGED IRANIAN BRETHREN. INDEED ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES URGED TAKE STEPS STRENGTHEN FOUNDATION) [Bahá'í INSTITUTIONS](#) THEIR COUNTRIES AS TRIBUTE SACRIFICES COURAGEOUSLY ACCEPTED MEMBERS COMMUNITY BAHAI'U'LLAH'S NATIVE LAND.

UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE



Comments

September 13. On this date in 1998, the UHJ wrote that "One of the tasks of the Representatives is to assist in educating the believers in the law of Huqúqu'lláh and its importance."

submitted24 days ago by A35821363

September 13. On this date in 1998, the Universal House of Justice [wrote](#) that "One of the tasks of the Representatives is to assist in educating the believers in the law of Huqúqu'lláh and its importance."

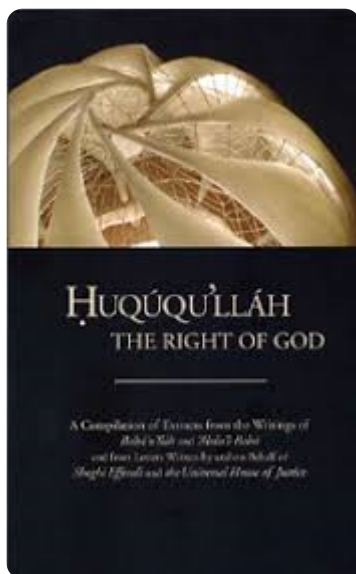
[98](#). "One of the tasks of the Representatives is to assist in educating the..."

One of the tasks of the Representatives is to assist in educating the believers in the law of [Huqúqu'lláh](#) and its importance. Naturally, this process of education cannot be limited to those whose possessions reach the amount to bring them within the obligation of the law, since this fact is often known only to the individual concerned. Children, also, should learn the law of the Right of God as part of their Bahá'í education. Sometimes friends become so enthused with the concept of this law that they express the wish to make contributions to the [Huqúqu'lláh Fund](#), even though they are not obliged to do so. The House of Justice has stated that it is permissible for the Representatives to accept such contributions.

In other words, if someone, out of their love for the Cause, makes a payment to [Huqúqu'lláh](#), it is not for the Representative to question whether or not that person is under obligation to pay it; he should graciously accept it.

This, as you can see, is quite different from actually encouraging Bahá'ís to pay more [Huqúqu'lláh](#) than the law of God requires them to do, and such encouragement would be a departure from the spirit of the law as Bahá'u'lláh has revealed it.

(13 September 1998, written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)



Comments

September 14. On this date in 1932, a letter was addressed to Adelbert Mühlischlegel noting that "Shoghi Effendi has not yet returned from his summer vacations," as he would leave Haifa for months at a time for rest and relaxation in the Swiss Alps.

submitted23 days ago by A35821363

September 14. On this date in 1932, [a letter](#) was addressed to [Adelbert Mühlischlegel](#) "regarding [his] question on the subject of holding the usual festivals during this year when we are mourning the loss of the [Greatest Holy Leaf](#)," who had passed away on July 15, 1932. The letter notes that "Shoghi Effendi has not yet returned from his summer vacations," as he would leave Haifa for months at a time for rest and relaxation in the [Swiss Alps](#).

14 September 1932 Dear [Dr. Muhlschlegel](#):

I am in receipt of your letter dated September 4th 1932. Regarding your question on the subject of holding the usual festivals during this year when we are mourning the loss of the [Greatest Holy Leaf](#); inasmuch as Shoghi Effendi has not yet returned from his [summer vacations](#) I cannot put your question to him and answer you immediately. The friends in America, however, who were confronted with the same problem, put to him the same question by telegram. I could, therefore, do no better than send you a copy of Shoghi Effendi's answer. I believe it will give you the necessary guidance in solving your problem. His cable runs as follows:

Bahá'í New York festive anniversaries should be suspended administrative gatherings including nineteen day feasts should be held with utmost simplicity....



Comments

September 14. On this date in 1948, Shoghi Effendi cabled the NSA of Germany stating "DISOBEDIENCE MISCONDUCT FAITHLESS BROTHER HUSSAYN NECESSITATED HIS EXPULSION...ASSOCIATION WITH COVENANT BREAKERS WARN BELIEVERS ANY COMMUNICATION WITH HIM CONSTITUTES DISLOYALTY TO COVENANT ABDUL-BAHA."

submitted23 days ago by A35821363

September 14. On this date in 1948, Shoghi Effendi [cabled](#) the NSA of Germany stating "DISOBEDIENCE MISCONDUCT FAITHLESS BROTHER [HUSSAYN](#) NECESSITATED HIS EXPULSION...ASSOCIATION WITH [COVENANT BREAKERS](#) WARN BELIEVERS ANY COMMUNICATION WITH HIM CONSTITUTES DISLOYALTY TO COVENANT ABDUL-BAHA."

On April 15, 1945, Shoghi Effendi [sent a cablegram](#) announcing "Faithless brother [Husayn](#), after long period of dishonourable conduct, has abandoned the Master's home to consort with [his sister](#) and [other Covenant-breakers](#)."

In March 1950, Shoghi Effendi would send a [further cable](#): "Faithless brother [Hussein](#), already abased through dishonorable conduct over period (of) years followed by association with Covenant-breakers (in) Holy Land and efforts (to) undermine Guardian's position, recently further demeaned himself through marriage under obscure circumstances with **lowborn Christian girl** (in) Europe." Shoghi Effendi would [later defend](#) the use of the term "lowborn Christian girl" as follows: "Regarding his cable concerning [Hussein](#): he has been very surprised to note that the terms 'low-born Christian girl ' and 'disgraceful

alliance' should arouse any question; it seems to him that the friends should realize it is not befitting for the Guardian's own brother, the grandchild of the Master, an [Afnán](#) and [Aghsán](#) mentioned in the Will and Testament of the Master, and of whom so much was expected because of his relation to the family of the Prophet, to marry an unknown girl, according to goodness knows what rite, who is not a believer at all."



Comments

September 14. On this date in 1961, the Custodians wrote that in Turkey "a court case was brought against the Bahá'ís by the public prosecutor, who claimed that the Faith was a "Tarighat"...forbidden by the law." In 1905, 'Abdu'l-Bahá claimed his tariqa had guided many Americans to Islam.

submitted23 days agobyA35821363

September 14. On this date in 1961, the Custodians [wrote](#) that "the Faith has been under attack in Turkey" and that "a court case was brought against the Bahá'ís by the public prosecutor, who claimed that the Faith was a "a court case was brought against the Bahá'ís by the public prosecutor, who claimed that the Faith was a "[Tarighat](#)", one of those sects of Islám whose rituals, practices and forms of worship are forbidden by the law of the country." In 1905, in response to a Commission of Inquiry, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [wrote the sultan a letter](#) protesting that his followers refrain from involvement in partisan politics and that his [tariqa](#) had guided many Americans to Islam.

To the National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'ís of the United States, Canada, the British Isles, Germany, Italy and Switzerland

[September 14, 1961](#)

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

As you know, for the last two years **the Faith has been under attack in Turkey**, starting with the arrest of a number of believers in Ankara during [Naw-Rúz](#) of 1959, when the police imprisoned members of the Local Spiritual Assembly. This incident received wide

publicity in the press. Subsequently the friends were released from prison, but **a court case was brought against the Bahá'ís by the public prosecutor, who claimed that the Faith was a "Tarighat", one of those sects of Islám whose rituals, practices and forms of worship are forbidden by the law of the country.**

Since then this matter has been the subject of lengthy litigation, with the Bahá'ís endeavouring to prove and establish the status of the Faith as an independent world religion, and the prosecuting authorities endeavouring to classify it as a forbidden sect of Islám.

The case is now to go to the high court on appeal, and the National Spiritual Assembly of Turkey has informed us that they believe that representations to the Turkish Ambassador in your respective countries' would be helpful, as these diplomatic representatives will then inform their government of these visits and the proofs which representatives of your Assembly will present showing the completely independent character of the Faith, as well as its world-wide acceptance as a universal religion completely dissociated from Islám or any other revealed religion.

In order that you may thoroughly understand the background of this situation, we share with you the following summary of the development of the case against the Faith in Turkey.

Following the [Turkish revolution in the 1920's](#), church and state were separated, but the major world religions, including the [four recognized schools of thought of Sunni Islám-Maliki, Hanbali, Shafei and Hanafi](#)-were left free to follow their beliefs and practices. However, according to Article 163 of the Turkish Criminal Code, the practice of every form of "Tarighat" was forbidden, and those who indulged in the forbidden rituals and practices of these Muslim sects were subject to severe punishment. Among these "Tarighat" are included the [Naghshbandi, Molvai, Jalali and Refai](#) sects. The Government of modern Turkey felt that the rituals and practices of these sects of Islam were out of place in modern life and harmful to the people; therefore they were forbidden.

It is clear that identification of the Faith with these forbidden sects would be a very bad blow for the Cause and conversely, if a high court of appeal in a Muslim country were to recognize the independent character of the Faith, it would be a very significant victory for the Cause, not only in Turkey, but throughout the East.

The original arrest of the members of the Local Spiritual Assembly in Ankara and the court case which followed resulted in wide publicity for the Cause, and most of the leading newspapers in the country opposed the action of the public prosecutor, and declared that

the Faith was an independent religion. At that time many documents were sent to Turkey from the World Centre and from various National Assemblies to establish and prove the independent character of the Cause. The court requested three experts in comparative religion to study the matter and give their opinion. Two of the three experts appointed expressed the view that the Bahá'í Faith was an independent religion, and one claimed that it was a sect of Islam. After receiving this report, the court then appointed three outstanding religious scholars to review all aspects of the question and advise the court of their views. All three of these scholars agreed in a finding that the Faith was an independent religion, and sent a documented statement containing authenticated proofs to the court on January 17, 1961. In this historic document the panel of experts proved that the Cause has nothing to do with "Tarighat" or forbidden sects of Islam, and that it is an independent religion comparable to Islam and Christianity.

After this document was submitted to the court, everyone was certain that the Court would issue its decree in accordance with the findings of these experts. However, the judges chose to disregard these findings entirely, and suddenly on July 15, 1961, declared that the Bahá'í Faith was a "Tarighat". Following this unexpected decision, the Bahá'ís of Ankara were forgiven, on the grounds that their gathering constituted a criminal case and under the general amnesty provisions of the law they could be released, that is, the case against them dropped. The court did say, however, that its decision could be appealed.

The National Spiritual Assembly of Turkey has decided to make a strong appeal to the higher court, and as indicated previously, this National Assembly believes that proper representations by your bodies to the Turkish Ambassadors in your respective countries will be helpful.

Therefore we request that you appoint without delay a well-qualified delegation composed of Western friends (the effect will be greater if the delegations do not include any of the Persian believers who may be residing in your respective countries) to call upon the Turkish Ambassador, explain your position as national representatives of the Bahá'í Community in your respective countries, indicate your great interest in a proper and just outcome of the pending case in Turkey, and give explanations and appropriate proofs of the independent character of the Faith and its world-wide scope as a separate revealed religion. In view of the highly nationalistic feelings of the Turkish people, particularly Turkish officials, we suggest that the representations to be made by your representatives do not in any way take the form of a protest. In other words, the approach should be a mild and friendly one, emphasizing the great interest which the Bahá'ís in your countries have in this matter.

We shall be very much interested in receiving in due course a report on the steps taken to carry out this request from the National Assembly of Turkey. We shall offer ardent prayers in the holy Shrines that all of these efforts will be divinely guided and assisted and that another great victory for the Faith may be won.

1 It is specifically requested that in the case of the Italo-Swiss National Assembly, the contact be made with the Turkish Ambassador in Switzerland. We do not believe that a visit to the Ambassador in Italy would be advisable at this time.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

[HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND](#)



Comments

September 14. On this date in 1982, the NSA of Canada wrote the UHJ "concerning the role of Local Spiritual Assemblies in guiding parents and children in standards of behavior for children at community gatherings, such as Nineteen Day Feasts and Bahá'í Holy Day observances."

submitted23 days agobyA35821363

September 14. On this date in 1982, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada [wrote](#) the Universal House of Justice "concerning the role of Local Spiritual Assemblies in guiding parents and children in standards of behavior for children at community gatherings, such as [Nineteen Day Feasts](#) and [Bahá'í Holy Day observances](#)."

343 Guidelines for Behavior of Children at Feast

14 OCTOBER 1982

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

343.1 The Universal House of Justice has received your letter Of 14 September 1982 concerning the role of Local Spiritual Assemblies in guiding parents and children in standards of behavior for children at community gatherings, such as [Nineteen Day Feasts](#) and [Bahá'í Holy Day observances](#).

343.2 Further to the letter we wrote on its behalf on 28 June 1977, the House of Justice has instructed us to say that children should be trained to understand the spiritual significance of the gatherings of the followers of the Blessed Beauty, and to appreciate the honor and

bounty of being able to take part in them, whatever their outward form may be. It is realized that some Bahá'í observances are lengthy and it is difficult for very small children to remain quiet for so long. In such cases one or other of the parents may have to miss part of the meeting in order to care for the child. The Spiritual Assembly can also perhaps help the parents by providing for a children's observance, suited to their capacities, in a separate room during part of the community's observance. Attendance at the whole of the adult celebration thus becomes a sign of growing maturity and a distinction to be earned by good behavior.

343.3 In any case, the House of Justice points out that parents are responsible for their children and should make them behave when they attend Bahá'í meetings. If children persist in creating a disturbance they should be taken out of the meeting. This is not merely necessary to ensure the properly dignified conduct of Bahá'í meetings but is an aspect of the training of children in courtesy, consideration for others, reverence, and obedience to their parents.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT



Comments

September 15. On this date in 1882, Khadíjih Bagum, one of the wives of the Báb, died in Shiraz. She died the same night as her slave Fiddih, who since the age of 7 had faithfully served her master, having been gifted to Khadíjih Bagum after being acquired by the Báb when she was no older than 7

submitted22 days agobyA35821363

September 15. On this date in 1882, [Khadíjih Bagum](#), one of the wives of the Báb, died in Shiraz. She died the same night as her slave Fiddih, who since the age of 7 had faithfully served her master, having been gifted to [Khadíjih Bagum](#) after being acquired by the Báb when she was no older than 7 years of age.

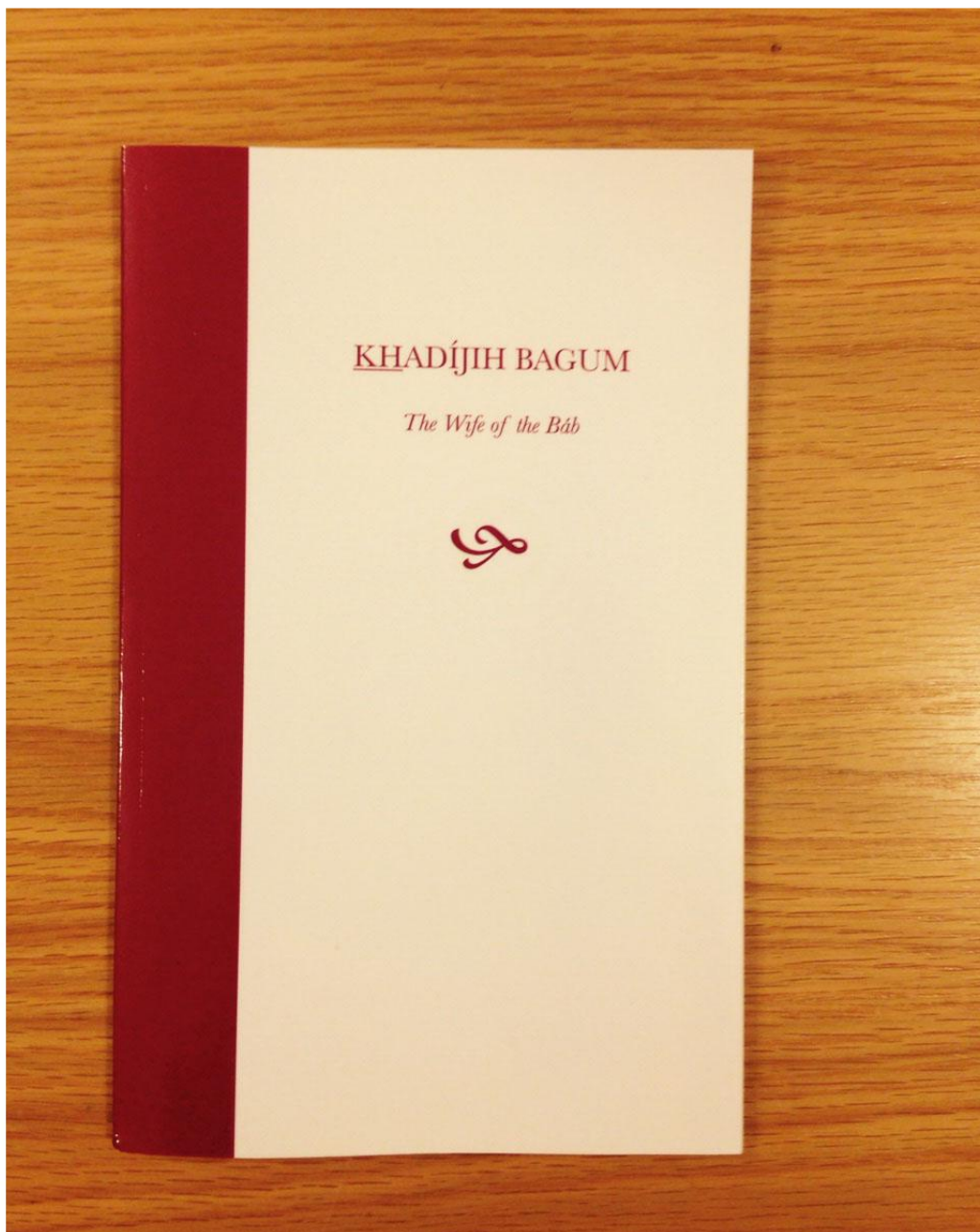
She was the niece of the Báb's maternal grandfather and had two brothers, Hají Mírzá Abu'l-Qasim and Hají Mírzá Siyyid Hasan, and one sister. The descendants of these two brothers-in-law of the Báb, along with the descendants of his maternal uncles are known as the [Afnán](#).

In August 1842, the Báb and [Khadíjih Bagum](#) married, and had one son, Ahmad, who died in infancy in 1843. After her husband's execution, she kept in correspondence with the Bábí community.

[Khadíjih Bagum](#) eventually accepted Bahá'u'lláh's claims and became a Bahá'í.

When the Báb acquired a slave named [Fiddih](#), who was no older than 7 years of age, he gifted her to [Khadíjih Bagum](#). [Fiddih](#) served her master faithfully for the rest of her life and would die the same night as her master.

[Khadíjih Bagum](#) and [Fiddih](#) both died on September 15, 1882.



Comments

September 15. On this date in 1951, Shoghi Effendi wrote "tremendous progress has been made in the United States during the last quarter of a century...only to the degree that they mirror forth in their joint lives the exalted standards of the Faith will they attract the masses to the Cause of God.

submitted22 days agobyA35821363

September 15. On this date in 1951, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#) "Although tremendous progress has been made in the United States during the last quarter of a century, he feels that the believers must ever-increasingly become aware of the fact that only to the degree that they mirror forth in their joint lives the exalted standards of the Faith will they attract the masses to the Cause of God."

"Although tremendous progress has been made in the United States during the last quarter of a century, he feels that the believers must ever-increasingly become aware of the fact that only to the degree that they mirror forth in their joint lives the exalted standards of the Faith will they attract the masses to the Cause of God." Letter 15 September 1951, on behalf Shoghi Effendi

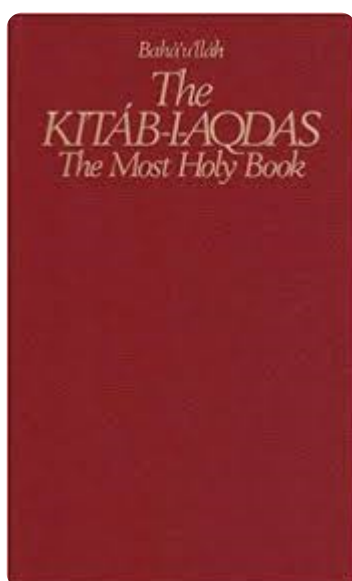


Comments

September 15. On this date in 2003, the Research Department of Universal House of Justice published a memorandum providing additional references concerning the following verse, which is paragraph 18 of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas: "It hath been ordained that every believer in God, the Lord of Judgement, shal

submitted22 days agobyA35821363

September 15. On this date in 2003, the Research Department of Universal House of Justice published [a memorandum](#) providing additional references concerning the following verse, which is paragraph 18 of the [Kitáb-i-Aqdas](#): "It hath been ordained that every believer in God, the Lord of Judgement, shall, each day, having washed his hands and then his face, seat himself and, [turning unto God](#), repeat "Alláh-u-Abhá" ninety-five times."



Comments

September 16. On this date in 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke at the home of Corinne True, who would later be appointed a Hand of the Cause of God by Shoghi Effendi. On February 25, 1902, Corinne True had written 'Abdu'l-Bahá a letter about the exclusion of women from the Chicago Bahá'í governing body..

submitted22 days agobyA35821363

September 16. On this date in 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke at the home of [Corinne True](#), who would later be appointed a Hand of the Cause of God by Shoghi Effendi. She had written 'Abdu'l-Bahá [a letter on February 25, 1902](#) about the exclusion of women from the Chicago Bahá'í governing body, noting that "many" felt it should be a "mixed board" because "women in America stand so conspicuously for all that is highest & best in every department." In his response 'Abdu'l-Bahá stated that while "in the sight of God, the conduct of women is the same as that of men" and there was "no difference" between the sexes, nevertheless the "House of Justice" had to consist only of men and that the "reason will presently appear, even as the sun at midday." True accepted 'Abdu'l-Bahá's ruling—which also affirmed the equality of the sexes—and poured her energy into the Chicago Bahá'í women's organization, which 'Abdu'l-Bahá highly praised. For the next eight years Chicago had two parallel Bahá'í organizations, one confined to men, the other to women.

On March 16, 1900, the nascent Chicago Bahá'í community selected a ten-member Board of Council. Neither Ibrahim George Kheiralla nor any of his supporters were selected to serve on the Board.

On May 15, 1901, the Chicago Bahá'ís elected a nine-man Board of Council for a term of five years.

On May 20, 1901, the number of members on the Board of Council was raised to 12.

On May 24, 1901, the name of the Chicago Board of Council was changed to the [House of Justice](#).

One year later, on May 10, 1902, on the request of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the all-male Chicago [House of Justice](#) changed its name to the [House of Spirituality](#). The body remained all-male. The Chicago House of Spirituality was complemented by the [Women's Assembly of Teaching](#).

On March 7, 1903, the House of Spirituality in Chicago, upon hearing from [Mírzá Asadu'llah Fádil Mázandarání](#) of the construction of the first Bahá'í House of Worship in Ashgabat, [wrote 'Abdu'l-Bahá](#) of their decision to build a House of Worship for Chicago.

In 1909, at the first American Bahá'í National Convention in Chicago, [Bahá'í Temple Unity](#) was incorporated to hold title to the Temple property and to provide for its construction. Women are allowed to serve on this body. A constitution was framed and an Executive Board of the Bahá'í Temple Unity elected.

In 1922, on the instructions of Shoghi Effendi, [Bahá'í Temple Unity](#) was renamed the National [Spiritual Assembly](#) of the United States and Canada.

On February 25, 1902, [Corinne True](#) [wrote 'Abdu'l-Bahá](#) about the exclusion of women from the Chicago Bahá'í governing body, Chicago [House of Justice](#), noting that "many" felt it should be a "mixed board" because "women in America stand so conspicuously for all that is highest & best in every department." In his response 'Abdu'l-Bahá stated that while "in the sight of God, the conduct of women is the same as that of men" and there was "no difference" between the sexes, nevertheless the "[House of Justice](#)" had to consist only of men and that the "reason will presently appear, even as the sun at midday." True accepted 'Abdu'l-Bahá's ruling—which also affirmed the equality of the sexes—and poured her energy into the Chicago Bahá'í women's organization, which 'Abdu'l-Bahá highly praised. For the next eight years Chicago had two parallel Bahá'í organizations, one confined to men, the other to women.

On November 30, 1930, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#) "In fact Bahá'u'lláh clearly states that affairs of state as well as religious questions are to be referred to the Houses of Justice into which the Assemblies of the Bahá'ís will eventually evolve."

Regarding the question raised in your letter, Shoghi Effendi believes that for the present the Movement, whether in the East or the West, should be dissociated entirely from polit-

ics. This was the explicit injunction of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. . . . Eventually, however, as you have rightly conceived it, the Movement will, as soon as it is fully developed and recognized, embrace both religious and political issues. In fact Bahá'u'lláh clearly states that affairs of state as well as religious questions are to be referred to the Houses of Justice into which the Assemblies of the Bahá'ís will eventually evolve."

(30 November 1930)

On October 5, 1950, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#) that "the Assembly is a nascent House of Justice."

[270. Assembly is a Nascent House of Justice--Individuals Toward Each Other Governed by Love, Unity, etc.](#)

"...There is a tendency to mix up the functions of the Administration and try to apply it in individual relationships, which is abortive, because **the Assembly is a nascent House of Justice** and is supposed to administer, according to the Teachings, the affairs of the community. But individuals toward each other are governed by love, unity, forgiveness and a sin-covering eye. Once the friends grasp this they will get along much better, but they keep playing Spiritual Assembly to each other and expect the Assembly to behave like an individual...."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Guardian to an individual believer, October 5, 1950: Living the Life, p. 17)

When today's Local and National Spiritual Assemblies become local and national Houses of Justice, their membership will once again become [exclusively male](#).



Comments

September 16. On this date in 1979, Enoch Olinga was killed. A close associate of Idi Amin, Olinga, his wife, and three of his five children were murdered by unknown gunmen, during the administration of President Obote when people affiliated with the Amin regime were being systematically targeted

submitted22 days ago by A35821363

September 16. On this date in 1979, [Enoch Olinga](#) was killed. Declared a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for his pioneering work in the British Cameroons, Shoghi Effendi entitled Olinga "Abd'l-Futuh", an Arabic name meaning "the father of victories" for the successive waves of people becoming Knights of Bahá'u'lláh in Africa after him. A close associate of Ugandan President [Idi Amin](#), who was deposed and exiled on April 11, 1979, Enoch Olinga, his wife, and three of his five children were murdered by unknown gunmen on September 16, 1979, during the administration of President [Milton Obote](#) when people affiliated with the Amin regime were being systematically targeted. [Denis MacEoin](#) touches on this topic in his 1979 *[Letter on Bahá'í attitudes towards politics and scholarship](#)*.



Comments

September 16. On this date in 1982, the UHJ wrote, "the manner in which meditation is done need not follow practices such as those advocated by proponents of yoga or other forms of Hindu mysticism."

submitted22 days agobyA35821363

September 16. On this date in 1982, the UHJ [wrote](#), "the manner in which meditation is done need not follow practices such as those advocated by proponents of yoga or other forms of Hindu mysticism."

It is apparent that you are well aware of the importance of daily prayer and meditation, but we are asked to point out that the manner in which meditation is done need not follow practices such as those advocated by proponents of yoga or other forms of Hindu mysticism. For example, the reading of the "Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh" or other of His Writings, and subsequent meditation on the wisdom they contain, can be an effective way of meditating. Further, the daily study of the writings of our Faith and contemplation of the inspiration to be found therein should prove to be most gratifying and provide the tranquillity that one seeks through meditation.

(From a letter dated 16 September 1982 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)



Comments

September 16. On this date in 1992, the UHJ wrote that Shoghi Effendi's English translation "of a Text should form the 'basis' for translations into other European languages" but "translations into Oriental languages such as Turkish and Urdu could be made directly from the original texts."

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September 16. On this date in 1992, the Universal House of Justice [wrote](#) that Shoghi Effendi's English translation "of a Text should form the 'basis' for translations into other European languages" but "translations into Oriental languages such as Turkish and Urdu could be made directly from the original texts."

The Universal House of Justice

Bahá'í World Centre

Department of the Secretariat

16 September 1992

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The questions contained in your letter to ... about the language of Revelation and the status of Shoghi Effendi's translations were referred to the Universal House of Justice. We are instructed to convey the following response.

With respect to your inquiry about whether, in the Bahá'í context, English might possibly be regarded as a language of Revelation, the House of Justice asks us to explain that, while

Shoghi Effendi's translations of the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh into English carry with them a large measure of interpretation of the intent and purpose of the Author of the text -- an interpretation which he, as Interpreter of the Sacred Text, could alone authoritatively provide -- one should not conclude that the English language into which the Writings were translated could, therefore, be considered as a language of Revelation.

As to the special status of Shoghi Effendi's translations, the beloved Guardian in a letter dated 15 November 1956 written on his behalf specified that **"this English translation" of a Text should form the "basis" for translations into other European languages**. The Universal House of Justice, in a letter of 8 September 1964 underlined the uniqueness of the translations of Shoghi Effendi and provided the following elucidation:

...the beloved Guardian was not only a translator but the inspired Interpreter of the Holy Writings; thus, where a passage in Persian or Arabic could give rise to two different expressions in English he would know which one to convey. Similarly he would be much better equipped than an average translator to know which metaphor to employ in English to express a Persian metaphor which might be meaningless in literal translation.

Thus, in general, **speakers of other European tongues will obtain a more accurate translation by following the Guardian's English translation than by attempting at this stage in Bahá'í history to translate directly from the original.**

This does not mean, however, that the translators should not also check their translation with the original texts if they are familiar with Persian or Arabic. There may be many instances where the exact meaning of the English text is unclear to them and this can be made evident by comparison with the original....

The Universal House of Justice has also clarified that while the English translations of the Guardian might serve as a useful resource, **translations into Oriental languages such as Turkish and Urdu could be made directly from the original texts.**

We are asked to assure you of the prayers of the Universal House of Justice for the confirmation of your services to the Cause of God.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

For Department of the Secretariat, ...

To summarize rules of Bahá'í translations...

Arabic works cannot be translated into Persian.

Persian works cannot be translated into Arabic.

Persian and Arabic works can be translated "into Oriental languages such as Turkish and Urdu."

Persian and Arabic works can be translated into English.

Persian and Arabic works cannot be translated into European languages.

English works can be translated into European languages.

For further reading, please see ["Persian, Arabic, and Provisional Translations"](#), ["Translation and provisional translations"](#), ["Unveiling the Hidden Words, by Diana Malouf: Commentary on 'Translating the Hidden Words,' review by Franklin Lewis"](#), a [letter dated June 27, 1933](#) from Shoghi Effendi to [Adelbert Mühlischlegel](#) about [Bahá'í orthography](#), a [letter dated June 30, 1999](#) from the Universal House of Justice outlining its procedures for approving provisional as opposed to authorized translations, and a [letter dated February 15, 1957](#) from Shoghi Effendi to French Bahá'ís.



Comments

September 17. On this date in 1912, an article in the Spokane Washington Daily Chronicle introduced 'Abdu'l-Bahá as "The Persian prophet, looked upon by 3,000,000 people in various parts of the world as the deliever of humanity."

submitted22 days agobyA35821363

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Comments

September 17. On this date in 1954, Ruhaniyyih Ruth Moffett left Israel. She described the founding of that country six years previous as "a most remarkable bloodless revolution occurred, when 4,000,000 Moslems fled and 1,000,000 Jews marched in and began tilling their ancestral soil..."

submitted22 days agobyA35821363

September 17. On this date in 1954, Ruhaniyyih Ruth Moffett left Israel. She [described](#) the founding of that country six years previous as "a most remarkable bloodless revolution occurred, when 4,000,000 Moslems fled and 1,000,000 Jews marched in and began tilling their ancestral soil, and a new nation was born. Today the blue and white flag with the star of Bethlehem flutters proudly over the world" youngest democracy --"" nation as eternally old as yesterday, as eternally young as tomorrow". Phonex-like, from the ashes have risen again to build a new homeland, to develop the most stupendous, life-salvaging operation ever undertaken in the whole history of mankind, and to fulfil the promise of the Ages!"

At 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, May 18, the Royal Sabena glided along the runway to the first stop in Brussels, Belgium, after the long transoceanic flight. There the same plane was reconditioned and flew over Europe, and Brindisi, the tip of the heel of Italy, over the Ionian and Mediterranean Seas, and arrived in Athens, where the plane was again reconditioned, and arrived at 10:30 p.m., May 18, 1954 at the airport at Jappa, Tel Aviv, Israel. This is the modern miracle, to travel thousands of miles from Chicago to Tel Aviv in only thirty nine hours!

As the Royal Sabena plane winged its way toward Israel, Ruhaniyyih wondered how it would look in comparison with when she saw it before - a desert land filled with rocks,

sand, thorny bushes and confusion, and where everyone seemed to be against his neighbor. As the approaching lights of the Holy Land again came into view, her heart was filled with joyful and reverential expectancy and she thought to the words of the song, "Israel - The Land of Promise Welcomes You".

As she gazed meditatively at the approaching lights of the Holy Land, the panorama of history seemed to unroll before her mind: of how Palestine was peopled by cave dwellers in about 3500 B.C.; of how Abraham was led to this land, and God made a covenant with Him, "that in the seed of Abraham shall all the nations of the earth be blest"; of the Cananites, and later how Moses led the Israelites out of bondage, and for forty years in the wilderness, and Joshua led them to the Promised Land flowing with milk and honey; how the Jewish people built up the land but turned away from God to gods of their own making. Then Saul became the first king and established a civic kingdom, but he died. David became the king unifying the kingdom and calling them to return to God: and David died and was called to his fathers. Solomon, his son became King. He expanded the kingdom, and to this day, the glory and unity of his kingdom is still sung. But Solomon died and the tribes became divided. Then the Assyrians in 722 B.C., destroyed Damascus and Israel and took the tribes into captivity, and they became scattered. After the Babylonian invasion in 586 B.C. the remaining tribes of Judah were taken into Babylonia and scattered. Alexander the Great captured Palestine in 332 B.C. The coming of Jesus, the Christ, had a profound effect on the history of this land, which became a noted center of pilgrimages.

Under the Moslem dominion from 636 A.D. for four centuries, and the long period of the Christian Crusades, one lasting 100 years, there was much destruction and a little progress. It was under the control of the Ottoman Turks from 1516 until the first World War, then it became a mandate of Great Britain, under the League of Nations. "The White Paper" gave the promise that the doors of Palestine would again open to her people. Many outbreaks of violence have occurred between the Jews and Arabs, which have caused this land to become one of the danger spots of the world. After World War II, the Jews began returning in large numbers, until today there are about 1,465,000 Jews, gathered from 75 countries, 125,000 Moslems, 40,000 Christians, and 16,000 Druzes in Israel.

On May 14, 1948, a most remarkable bloodless revolution occurred, when 4,000,000 Moslems fled and 1,000,000 Jews marched in and began tilling their ancestral soil, and a new nation was born. Today the blue and white flag with the star of Bethlehem flutters proudly over the world's youngest democracy -- "a nation as eternally old as yesterday, as eternally young as tomorrow". Phoenix-like, from the ashes have risen

again to build a new homeland, to develop the most stupendous, life-salvaging operation ever undertaken in the whole history of mankind, and to fulfil the promise of the Ages!

Ruth J. Moffett was born in 1880 and met Abdulbaha on a train platform in Chicago in 1912. After attending one of his lectures, she became a Bahai and became active in service in 1919. Her teaching efforts took her throughout the Americas, Europe, Egypt and the Near East. The Greatest Holy Leaf (Bahiyih Khanum) named her Ruhaniyyih, conoting spirituality, joy and beauty.



Comments

[–]chaatops0 points1 point2 points22 days ago(0 children)

16,000 Palestinians perished in the 1948 Nakba, including Palestinians who were literally thrown to their ending down Mt. Carmel. Despite the inhuman statement quoted above, I still encounter Palestinians - whose families were displaced from Haifa under force - who extend grace to Bahais. May that unfathomable grace be received as a duty.

[–]The_Observer210[🗨️]0 points1 point2 points21 days ago(0 children)

Is Bahai Zionist then? Ew

September 17. On this date in 1961, the Bahá'í House of Worship in Ingleside, New South Wales, in the northern suburbs of Sydney, Australia was dedicated.

submitted22 days agobyA35821363

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Comments

September 17. On this date in 1971, the UHJ wrote, "regarding the inscription on a headstone...not to use any form of the Greatest Name but a nine-pointed star may be used...The position of the body in the grave should be with the feet pointing toward the Qiblih, which is Bahji in Akka."

submitted22 days agobyA35821363

September 17. On this date in 1971, the Universal House of Justice [wrote](#), "regarding the inscription on a headstone, the beloved Guardian asked the believers not to use any form of the Greatest Name but a nine-pointed star may be used. Or, you may wish to have an appropriate text from the Sacred Writings inscribed on the headstone. The position of the body in the grave should be with the feet pointing toward the Qiblih, which is Bahji in Akka."

[656. The Most Great Name or Ringstone Symbol Not Appropriate on Gravestones](#)

"Normally the building of structures or headstones on graves should be left to the family of the deceased, and all expenses should be covered by them.

"The use of the Most Great Name or the ringstone symbol on gravestones is not appropriate. In a letter dated September 17, 1971 to an individual believer we wrote the following:

'Concerning the questions you ask in your postscript, there is no specific ruling regarding the type of headstone that may be used at a grave site. However, regarding the inscription on a headstone, the beloved Guardian asked the believers not to use any form of the Greatest Name but a nine-pointed star may be used. Or, you may wish to have an appropriate text from the Sacred Writings inscribed on the headstone. The position of the body in the grave should be with the feet pointing toward the Qiblih, which is Bahji in Akka'."

(From a letter of the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of Uganda, May 4, 1972)



Comments

September 17. On this date in 1973, the UHJ cabled "DELIGHTED ANNOUNCE APPOINTMENT HUSAYN AMANAT BRILLIANT YOUNG BAHAI ARCHITECT CRADLE FAITH AS ARCHITECT OF BUILDING FOR UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE. THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE"

submitted22 days ago by A35821363

September 17. On this date in 1973, the UHJ [cabled](#) "DELIGHTED ANNOUNCE APPOINTMENT [HUSAYN AMANAT](#) BRILLIANT YOUNG BAHAI ARCHITECT CRADLE FAITH AS ARCHITECT OF BUILDING FOR UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE. THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE"

136 Appointment of the Architect of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice 17 SEPTEMBER 1973

To all National Spiritual Assemblies

136.1 DELIGHTED ANNOUNCE APPOINTMENT [HUSAYN AMANAT](#) BRILLIANT YOUNG BAHAI ARCHITECT CRADLE FAITH AS ARCHITECT OF BUILDING FOR UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE. THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

[Hossein Amanat](#) is the brother of [Abbas Amanat](#), Professor of History & International Studies at Yale University who is a former Bahá'í. The Seat of the Universal House of Justice was completed in 1982 during the second stage of building of the [Arc](#), and occupied in 1983.



Comments

September 17. On this date in 1979, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum wrote a poem, "On Hearing of Enoch's Murder" which starts "The sunlight is black, The sunlight is black, What raven wing, Covered my sun at noonday? In my mouth is the salt of tears, I cannot swallow so much salt..."

submitted22 days agobyA35821363

September 17. On this date in 1979, [Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum](#) wrote [a poem, "On Hearing of Enoch's Murder."](#) which starts "The sunlight is black, The sunlight is black, What raven wing, Covered my sun at noonday? In my mouth is the salt of tears, I cannot swallow so much salt..."

The sunlight is black

The sunlight is black

What raven wing

Covered my sun at noonday?

In my mouth is the salt of tears

I cannot swallow so much salt . . .

Blood is so beautiful

Blood is so pure

Why do the people let blood

Run in the street?
So long it took
To make this man
Noble and good
His mind and his soul
Expanded like sunlight
At noonday.
Why did you kill him?
Are you pleased at this riddled shell,
This mangle of bone and flesh?
Did you think your deed in the dark
Was a bright light?
Everything is pulsing,
Throbbing and throbbing!
There is no answer
And the sunlight is black.
Go Enoch go!
Go to Musa on the hill
Go to your Master
Go to your Guardian
Go to the Kingdom of Light!
But ask not of us
Nor of your people

Who have plucked a sin
Big enough and dark enough
To blot out the noonday sun!
Woe to Africa!
Weep as you have not wept before,
Weep on your knees,
Weep your eyes blind,
You have murdered Abu'l-Futoeh,
The Father of Victories is dead
At your hand, at your hand!
Your jeweled crown page laced by God on your head
Is rolled into the grave---
Weep, weep, weep your heart away.



Comments

September 17. On this date in 1986, the UHJ wrote "Bahá'ís of Europe would do well to increase their collaboration with the Esperanto Movement, and we encourage Bahá'ís who feel the urge to assist in this area, to learn Esperanto and take an active part in the activities of the Movement."

submitted22 days ago by A35821363

September 17. On this date in 1986, the Universal House of Justice [wrote](#) "Bahá'ís of Europe would do well to increase their collaboration with the Esperanto Movement, and we encourage Bahá'ís who feel the urge to assist in this area, to learn Esperanto and take an active part in the activities of the Movement."

We feel that, within the framework of their efforts for the promotion of peace, the Bahá'ís of Europe would do well to increase their collaboration with the Esperanto Movement, **and we encourage Bahá'ís who feel the urge to assist in this area, to learn Esperanto and take an active part in the activities of the Movement.** As you know, although both 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi have made it clear that it is by no means certain that Esperanto will be chosen as the international auxiliary language of the world, 'Abdu'l-Bahá encouraged the friends in the east and the west to learn it as a practical step in the promotion of the concept of the adoption of an international auxiliary language to break down the barriers to understanding between peoples.

Universal House of Justice 17 September 1986 letter to NSAs in Europe

On April 25, 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave [a talk to Esperantists](#) in Washington, D.C., stating "We must endeavor with all our powers to establish this international auxiliary language throughout the world. It is my hope that it may be perfected through the bounties of God

and that intelligent men may be selected from the various countries of the world to organize an international congress whose chief aim will be the promotion of this universal medium of speech."

Today the greatest need of the world of humanity is discontinuance of the existing misunderstandings among nations. This can be accomplished through the unity of language. Unless the unity of languages is realized, the Most Great Peace and the oneness of the human world cannot be effectively organized and established because the function of language is to portray the mysteries and secrets of human hearts. The heart is like a box, and language is the key. Only by using the key can we open the box and observe the gems it contains. Therefore, the question of an auxiliary international tongue has the utmost importance. Through this means international education and training become possible; the evidence and history of the past can be acquired. The spread of the known facts of the human world depends upon language. The explanation of divine teachings can only be through this medium. As long as diversity of tongues and lack of comprehension of other languages continue, these glorious aims cannot be realized. Therefore, the very first service to the world of man is to establish this auxiliary international means of communication. It will become the cause of the tranquillity of the human commonwealth. Through it sciences and arts will be spread among the nations, and it will prove to be the means of the progress and development of all races. **We must endeavor with all our powers to establish this international auxiliary language throughout the world. It is my hope that it may be perfected through the bounties of God and that intelligent men may be selected from the various countries of the world to organize an international congress whose chief aim will be the promotion of this universal medium of speech.**

One year later, on February 12, 1913, 'Abdu'l-Bahá' addressed the Paris Esperanto Society, as [reported in the "Star of the West" magazine](#)..

Praise be to God, that Dr Zamenhof has created the Esperanto language. It has all the potential qualities of universal adoption. All of us must be grateful and thankful to him for his noble effort, for in this matter he has served his fellowmen well. He has constructed a language which will bestow divine benefits on all peoples. With untiring efforts and self-sacrifice on the part of its devotees it gives promise of universal acceptance. Therefore **everyone of us must study this language and make every effort to spread it so that each day it may receive a wider recognition, be accepted by all nations and governments of the world and become a part of the curriculum in all the public schools. I hope that the business of the future conferences and congresses will be carried on in Esperanto. In the future two languages will be taught in the schools, one the native**

tongue, the other the international auxiliary language. Consider today how difficult is human communication. One may study 50 languages and yet travel through a country and still be at a loss. I, myself, know several of the Oriental languages, but know no Western tongue. Had this universal language pervaded the globe, I should have studied it and you would have been directly informed of my thoughts and I of yours and a special friendship would have been established between us.

Please send some teachers to Persia, if you can, so that they may teach Esperanto to the young people. I have written asking some of them to come here to study it.

I hope that it will be promulgated very rapidly - then the world of humanity will find eternal peace; all the nations will associate with one another like mothers and sisters, fathers and brothers, and each individual member of the body politic will be fully informed of the thoughts of all

This talk was also covered in [J.E. Esselmont's](#) book *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* quotes 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the chapter entitled *Universal Language*:

At an Esperanto banquet given in Paris in February 1913, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said:—

Today one of the chief causes of the differences in Europe is the diversity of languages. We say this man is a German, the other is an Italian, then we meet an Englishman and then again a Frenchman. Although they belong to the same race, yet language is the greatest barrier between them. Were a universal auxiliary language in operation they would all be considered as one.

His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh wrote about this international language more than forty years ago. He says that as long as an international language is not adopted, complete union between the various sections of the world will be unrealized, for we observe that misunderstandings keep people from mutual association, and these misunderstandings will not be dispelled except through an international auxiliary language.

Generally speaking, the whole people of the Orient are not fully informed of events in the West, neither can the Westerners put themselves in sympathetic touch with the Easterners; their thoughts are enclosed in a casket—the international language will be the master key to open it. Were we in possession of a universal language, the Western books could easily be translated into that language, and the Eastern peoples be informed of their contents. In the same way the books of the East could be translated into that language for the benefit of the people in the West. The greatest means of progress towards the union of East and

West will be a common language. It will make the whole world one home and become the strongest impulse for human advancement. It will upraise the standard of the oneness of humanity. It will make the earth one universal commonwealth. It will be the cause of love between the children of men. It will cause good fellowship between the various races.

Now, praise be to God that Dr. Zamenhof has invented the Esperanto language. It has all the potential qualities of becoming the international means of communication. All of us must be grateful and thankful to him for this noble effort; for in this way he has served his fellowmen well. With untiring effort and self-sacrifice on the part of its devotees Esperanto will become universal. Therefore every one of us must study this language and spread it as far as possible so that day by day it may receive a broader recognition, be accepted by all nations and governments of the world, and become a part of the curriculum in all the public schools. I hope that Esperanto will be adopted as the language of all the future international conferences and congresses, so that all people need acquire only two languages—one their own tongue and the other the international language. Then perfect union will be established between all the people of the world. Consider how difficult it is today to communicate with various nations. If one studies fifty languages one may yet travel through a country and not know the language. Therefore I hope that you will make the utmost effort, so that this language of Esperanto may be widely spread.

In the past, Bahá'ís were more active in learning and encouraging the learning of Esperanto, and the links between Esperanto and the Bahá'í Faith are numerous. [Ehsan Yarshater](#), the ex-Bahá'í founder and editor of *Encyclopedia Iranica*, notes how as a child in Iran he learned and taught Esperanto and that when his mother was visiting Haifa he wrote her a letter in Persian as well as Esperanto. L.L. Zamenhof's daughter, [Lidia Zamenhof](#) was a convert to the Bahá'í Faith. At the request of 'Abdu'l-Baha, [Agnes Baldwin Alexander](#) became an early advocate of Esperanto and used it to spread the Bahá'í teachings at meetings and conferences in Japan.

Due to the failure of Esperanto to gain significant traction, however, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's statements have been backtracked, such that [Shoghi Effendi](#) said

Regarding the subject of Esperanto; it should be made clear to the believers that **while the teaching of that language has been repeatedly encouraged by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, there is no reference either from Him or from Bahá'u'lláh that can make us believe that it will necessarily develop into the international auxiliary language of the future.** Bahá'u'lláh has specified in His Writings that such a language will either have to be chosen

from one of the existing languages, or an entirely new one should be created to serve as a medium of exchange between the nations and peoples of the world. Pending this final choice, the Bahá'ís are advised to study Esperanto only in consideration of the fact that the learning of this language can considerably facilitate intercommunication between individuals, groups and Assemblies throughout the Bahá'í world in the present stage of the evolution of the Faith.

On August 3, 1935, a letter read "Shoghi Effendi, as you know, has been invariably encouraging the believers, both in the East and in the West, to make an intensive study of [Esperanto], and to consider it as an important medium for the spread of the Cause in international circles." The letter continued "Neither Bahá'u'lláh, nor even `Abdu'l-Bahá, ever stated that Esperanto will be the international auxiliary language. The Master simply expressed the hope that it may, provided certain conditions were fulfilled, develop into such a medium."

3 August 1935

He wishes me particularly to convey to you his most genuine appreciation of your services in connection with the publication of "La Nova Tago" which he hopes will, through your efforts and those of the Esperanto-speaking Bahá'ís both in Germany and abroad, develop gradually into a leading Esperanto review, and thus become an effective medium for the spread of Teachings in Esperantist circles throughout the world. It is in view of the far-reaching possibilities which this publication can have as a teaching organ, that he has urged the German N.S.A. to resume its publication when, a few months ago, they had almost decided to discontinue printing it.

With regard to your request for a special article from the Guardian which you wish to have published in the forthcoming issue of your magazine. He would suggest that you should translate his general letter addressed to the friends a few years ago, entitled "The Goal of a New World Order", as this, he feels, is a very suitable material for publication in that review, and is by far better than anything he can write at present.

As to your suggestion regarding a more widespread use of the Esperanto among the Bahá'ís as a medium of correspondence. Shoghi Effendi, as you know, has been invariably encouraging the believers, both in the East and in the West, to make an intensive study of that language, and to consider it as an important medium for the spread of the Cause in international circles. He has been specially urging the friends to have the Cause well represented in all Esperanto Congresses and associations, and by this means cultivate greater friendship and cooperation between them and the Esperantists.

But in this connection, he feels, he must make it clear that although the Cause views with much sympathy and appreciation the activities which the Esperantists are increasingly initiating for the spread of their language, yet it considers that the adoption of the Esperanto by the entire world is by no means an inevitable fact. **Neither Bahá'u'lláh, nor even `Abdu'l-Bahá, ever stated that Esperanto will be the international auxiliary language. The Master simply expressed the hope that it may, provided certain conditions were fulfilled, develop into such a medium.**

On January 29, 1904, [Lidia Zamenhof](#), the daughter of Esperanto creator [L.L. Zamenhof](#), was born. She converted to the Bahá'í Faith around 1925. In late 1937 she went to the United States to teach that religion as well as Esperanto. In December 1938, on the instructions of Shoghi Effendi, she returned to Poland, where she continued to teach and translated many Bahá'í writings. The description of her life in Esther Schor's *Bridge of Words* might be of some surprise to those who are only familiar with her portrayal from official Bahá'í sources.

[Keith Ransom-Kehler](#), who died of small pox in Isfahan on October 23, 1933, is considered the first American Bahá'í martyr.

[May Maxwell](#), who died of a heart attack while teaching the Bahá'í Faith in Argentina in 1940, [was designated a martyr](#) by her son-in-law Shoghi Effendi.

But [Lidia Zamenhoff](#), who died in a Nazi concentration camp while teaching the Bahá'í Faith in Poland, was explicitly stated not to be a martyr.

Shoghi Effendi [cabled](#) the following about [May Maxwell](#) on March 3, 1940...

'Abdu'l-Bahá's beloved handmaid, distinguished disciple May Maxwell (is) gathered (into the) glory (of the) Abhá Kingdom. Her earthly life, so rich, eventful, incomparably blessed, (is) worthily ended. To sacred tie her signal services had forged, (the) priceless honor (of a) martyr's death (is) now added. (A) double crown deservedly won. (The) Seven-Year Plan, particularly (the) South American campaign, derive fresh impetus (from the) example (of) her glorious sacrifice. Southern outpost (of) Faith greatly enriched through association (with) her historic resting-place destined remain (a) poignant reminder (of the) resistless march (of the) triumphant army (of) Bahá'u'lláh. Advise believers (of) both Americas (to) hold befitting memorial gathering.

Shoghi Effendi [cabled](#) the following about [Lidia Zamenhof](#) on January 28, 1946...

Heartily approve nationwide observance for dauntless Lydia Zamenhof. Her notable services, tenacity, modesty, unwavering devotion fully merit high tribute by American believers. Do not advise, however, that you designate her a martyr.

The description of her life in Esther Schor's *Bridge of Words* might be of some surprise to those who are only familiar with her portrayal from official Bahá'í sources.

The Bahá'í leadership organized to have Lidia brought to tour and teach in the United States. Their plan was to have her work there, but they neglected her, failing to do proper legal paperwork and poorly accommodating her.

By the time Lidia's visa expired, her extension request was denied because she was found working without a work permit, which her Bahá'í handlers had not obtained. Her friends in the United States pleaded with her to not return to Poland, on account of her Jewishness and the expected invasion of Poland by Nazi Germany, which would occur in 1939.

Lidia Zamenhof wrote Shoghi Effendi, pleading for guidance and help. In a final desperate plea she even asked him to give her asylum in Haifa, a request that was tersely denied. Shoghi Effendi told her she must return to Poland because they "need" her there to spread the Bahá'í Faith there. She returned to Poland and spent her last days recruiting for the Bahá'í Faith, ultimately managing to convert one person. Even after her return to Poland, she wrote Shoghi Effendi stating her intention to stay in Poland a few weeks and then go to France. Again, Shoghi Effendi wrote her, telling her to remain in "your native country Poland, where the Faith is still practically unknown." Lidia Zamenhof would eventually be killed by the Nazis.

Later friends of Lidia petitioned the Bahá'ís to formally declare her a martyr of the Faith. Their request was denied.

The story is related in *Bridge of Words*, pages 181 to 195 in the 7th and 8th sub-chapters titled "The Priestess" and "Vanishings".

Here is a passage detailing her interactions with Shoghi Effendi:

...the day her visa expired, she learned that her extension had been denied on the ground that she had violated employment regulations. If there had been any doubt, it was now clear: she had been ill-advised and ill-served by her handlers, who had failed to apply for an available waiver for employment laws. Though her friend Ernest Dodge did his utmost for months to plead her case, he was only able to secure an extension until early December.

Advice from friends streamed in: she should go to Cuba, Canada, France, California--anywhere but Poland--and reapply for a visa. Panic was not in her nature, but anxious and fearful, she once again turned to the Guardian for advice. Heller quotes her cable in full:

EXTENSION SOJOURN AMERICAN REFUSED. FRIENDS TRYING TO CHANGE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION. OTHERWISE RETURNING TO POLAND. PLEASE CABLE IF SHOULD ACT OTHERWISE.

His response was decisive:

APPROVE RETURN TO POLAND. DEEP LOVING APPRECIATION. SHOGHI.[169]

Still she waited, hoping that her fate would turn for the better. For a time, an invitation seemed to be forthcoming from Canada, but "the Canadians aren't courageous enough. . . . they 'see difficulties.'" This time, when she requested Shoghi Effendi's permission to meet him in Haifa, she was seeking refuge, not transcendence. He cabled his reply:

REGRET DANGEROUS SITUATION IN PALESTINE NECESSITATES POSTPONEMENT OF PILGRIMAGE.

She wrote, with the humility of a medieval pilgrim, that she knew it was because "such privilege is not often received and that certainly one must deserve it, and second--because of the war in Palestine." Indeed, Haifa was dangerous. Strategically important because of an oil pipeline, Haifa had been the target of attacks by displaced *fellahin*, by the Irgun, and by the Royal Navy trying to stem the tide of gunrunner and terrorists. Surely Shoghi Effendi knew that to ensure Lidia Zamenhof's safety, he would have to shelter her in his compound, and this he was not prepared to do.

She told her anguished friends that she intended to return to Poland: after all, Shoghi Effendi had advised it, and it was God's will that she rejoin her family in a time of trouble.

From the following section:

Protest was not an option for Lidia Zamenhof when she returned to Warsaw in the winter of 1938. She was reconciled to her fate, and when her faith needed shoring up, she wrote long letters to her Bahai friends: "If I left America," she wrote, "perhaps it was because God preferred that I work in another land." She was writing bleak allegories: Christmas trees with candles that burn for a moment and go dark; a country called "Nightland," "where the sun had not risen for so long that it had nearly been forgotten." [176] After she wrote to

Shoghi Effendi that she planned to stay in Poland a few weeks, then go to France, his secretary replied:

Although your efforts to obtain a permit [in the United States] . . . did not prove successful, you should nevertheless be thankful for the opportunity you have had of undertaking such a long and fruitful journey. He hopes that experiences you have gathered during all these months . . . will now help you to work more effectively to spread the Cause in the various European countries you visit, and particularly in your native country Poland, where the Faith is still practically unknown.[127]

In a postscript, the Guardian himself wrote that he looked forward to meeting her "face to face in the Holy Land" at a time "not far distant." In the meantime, she was to bring Bahai to the Poles, lecturing, paying calls, and translating sacred Bahai texts into Polish. After eighteen months of effort, she could count all the Bahais in Poland on one hand.

The chapter goes on to detail the circumstances of her capture and death, and the last paragraph is as follows:

A few months after the war ended, the Bahai National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada began to plan a memorial service for Lidia Zamenhof. They consulted Shogh Effendi: shouldn't she be designated among the martyrs of the Bahai faith? On January 28th, 1946, the eve of what would have been Lidia's forty-second birthday, Shoghi Effendi cabled his American followers:

HEARTILY APPROVE NATIONWIDE OBSERVANCE FOR DAUNTLESS LYDIA ZAMENHOF. HER NOTABLE SERVICES, TENACITY, MODESTY, UNWAVERING DEVOLUTION FULLY MERIT HIGH TRIBUTE BY AMERICAN BELIEVERS. DO NOT ADVISE, HOWEVER, THAT YOU DESIGNATE HER A MARTYR.[183]

She had intended to give her life for the Bahai faith, but died as an Esperantist, a Zamenhof, and a Jew.



Comments

[–][deleted]0 points1 point2 points20 days ago(0 children)

Saluton Bahaanoj! Kiel vi cxiuj fartas? Espereble bone!

Baha'i History - September 18. On this date in 1954, Ethel Dawe, who served on the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia and New Zealand from 1948 to 1953, died.

submitted19 days agobyA35821363

September 18. On this date in 1954, [Ethel Dawe](#), who served on the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia and New Zealand from 1948 to 1953, died.



Comments

September 18. On this date in 1926, a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi by Ruhi Afnan stated Shoghi Effendi "was very glad to learn of the encouraging prospects you have for your 'Herald of the South'" magazine, which was published from 1925 through 1960.

submitted 19 days ago by A35821363

September 18. On this date in 1926, [a letter](#) written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi by Ruhi Afnan stated Shoghi Effendi "was very glad to learn of the encouraging prospects you have for your 'Herald of the South'" magazine, which was published from 1925 through 1960.

On December 17, 1922, two days after returning to Haifa, Shoghi Effendi sent [a cable](#), his first, to the "Blest and beloved ones of 'Abdu'l-Bahá!" On April 5, 1922, some four months after returning to Haifa subsequent to the death of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi left Haifa with his eldest cousin and close friend, [Ruhi Afnan](#) who he would later declare a Covenant-breaker, for rest and relaxation in the [Bernese Oberland](#) in the [Swiss Alps](#). In his absence, Shoghi Effendi placed [Bahíyyih Khánum](#) as Head of the Cause, and later that month the "Star of the West" magazine would publish letters from Shoghi Effendi and Bahíyyih Khánum explaining the situation. Ruhi Afnan would be declared a Covenant-breaker in a series of cablegrams in the 1950's.

On May 17, 1953, Shoghi Effendi addressed a [cablegram](#) to the Bahá'ís of the word, condemning his one-time close companion, secretary, and first cousin as "treacherous [Ruhi Afnan](#)."

[Treacherous Ruhi Afnan](#)

Treacherous [Ruhi Afnan](#), not content with previous disobedience, correspondence with [Ahmad Sohrab](#), contact with [old Covenant-breakers](#), sale, in conjunction with other members of family, of sacred property purchased by Founder of Faith, and allowing [his sister](#) to marry [son of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's enemy](#), is now openly lecturing on Bahá'í movement, claiming to be its exponent and is misrepresenting the teachings and deliberately causing confusion in minds of authorities and the local population. Inform National Assemblies.

--Shoghi

[Cablegram, May 17, 1953]

The cablegrams concerning the declaration of [Ruhi Afnan](#) a Covenant-breaker include one from December 13, 1951 titled "[Old and New Covenant-Breakers](#)" where Shoghi Effendi says, "Evidences multiplying attesting [Ruhi's](#) increasing rebelliousness, efforts exerted [my eldest sister](#) pave way fourth alliance members family Siyyid `Alí involving marriage his granddaughter with [Ruha's](#) son and personal contact recently established my own treacherous, despicable brother [Riaz](#) with Majdi'd-Din, redoubtable enemy Faith, former henchman [Muhammad-'Ali](#), Archbreaker Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant.



Comments

September 18. On this date in 1962, Dulcie Burns Dive died. She was a New Zealand Bahá'í with Maori heritage who became the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for the Cook Islands. She also served on the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia and New Zealand from 1944 to 1948 and 1951 to 1953.

submitted19 days agobyA35821363

September 18. On this date in 1962, [Dulcie Burns Dive](#) died. She was a New Zealand Bahá'í with Maori heritage who became the [Knight of Bahá'u'lláh](#) for the [Cook Islands](#). She also served on the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia and New Zealand from 1944 to 1948 and 1951 to 1953.



Comments

September 18. On this date in 1985, the NSA of the US wrote LSAs regarding the restoration of administrative rights to Bahá'ís who left Iran via dissimulation, noting "until the lapse of one year, and then only contingent on the attitude and degree of repentance of the individuals concerned."

submitted19 days ago by A35821363

September 18. On this date in 1985, the NSA of the U.S. [wrote](#) all LSAs regarding the restoration of administrative rights to Bahá'ís who left Iran via dissimulation, noting "until the lapse of one year, and then only contingent on the attitude and degree of repentance of the individuals concerned."

[3. Letter from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States](#)

September 18, 1985

To Local Spiritual Assemblies

Among the hardships the Bahá'ís in Iran have been experiencing during the last few years has been the restriction placed on their travel. Since April 1982 any Iranian who applies for an official exit permit is required to complete a form where one of the questions is about religious affiliation. When Bahá'ís respond to the question truthfully they are not allowed to leave the country. As explained by the Universal House of Justice, "If they write 'Bahá'í', they cannot leave the country and if they write anything other than 'Bahá'í', it is tantamount to recanting their faith." Some of the Iranian friends have obtained their passports and exit permits through broker, and although they themselves have not filled out the forms necessary for procuring such documents, the broker has completed the form on

their behalf, most certainly indicating their religion as Moslem, Christian, etc., and not Bahá'í. Consequently, the Universal House of Justice, at the request made by the National Spiritual Assembly of Iran before it was disbanded, announced to all National Spiritual Assemblies that any Iranian Bahá'ís who left Iran via Tehran airport after 22 June 1983 is assumed to have denied his faith personally or by the intermediary of another in order to obtain the permit and is considered to be without administrative rights.

The Universal House of Justice ruled that the restoration of such rights is not to be considered by the National Spiritual Assemblies until the lapse of one year, and then only contingent on the attitude and degree of repentance of the individuals concerned. In addition, the National Spiritual Assemblies have been delegated the responsibility of ascertaining the procedures adopted by these individuals when leaving Iran and their reasons for doing so.

Therefore, when a person who has been deprived of his administrative rights applies for reinstatement, the Local Spiritual Assemblies have to insure that certain criteria are met before submitting the application to the National Spiritual Assembly for its deliberation and decision.

To facilitate your understanding of these criteria we offer the following guidelines:

- 1) Attempt to determine the degree of the individual's contrition and report the process used to reach this judgement, i.e. did your Assembly meet with the individual, did he/she meet with your representative, did you engage the assistance of a translator?
- 2) Has the individual participated in Bahá'í community life to whatever degree was possible? What is your evaluation of his actions during the period he has been under sanctions? To what extent have they exemplified Bahá'í standards of conduct?
- 3) What is the individual's motive in wanting to have their administrative rights restored? (Please bear in mind that a number of individuals were never active in the Faith in Iran but now wish to be considered Bahá'ís for their own personal convenience and self-interest.) Their visa status in the United States must be verified.
- 4) Ascertain and report the procedures adopted by the individual for obtaining a valid passport and exit visa in order to leave Iran.
- 5) Determine the reasons why the individual departed from Iran.

6) Explain to the individual that their administrative rights will not be automatically restored after the passage of a year, simply by writing a letter of regret.

7) Each case must be considered separately; the result of this study along with your recommendation must be conveyed to the National Spiritual Assembly.

We have enclosed for your reference and guidance two letters recently received from the Universal House of Justice concerning the restoration of administrative rights of those who left Iran with official exit permits.

Should you have questions concerning this matter please feel free to contact the Office of Community Administration at the Bahá'í National Center.

With warm regards,

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States



Comments

September 19. On this date in 1895, Sylvia loas was born. She would serve on the International Bahá'í Council, both as an appointed and elected member. She was the wife of Hand of the Cause of God Leroy loas, who accompanied Shoghi Effendi and Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm for their ...

submitted19 days ago by A35821363

September 19. On this date in 1895, [Sylvia loas](#) was born. She would serve on the [International Bahá'í Council](#), serving both as an appointed and elected member. She was the wife of [Hand of the Cause of God Leroy loas](#), who accompanied Shoghi Effendi and Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm for their May 26, 1952 visit of Israeli President [Yitzhak Ben-Zvi](#) and was the author of a January 18, 1953, letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, later referenced in a Bahai News article in March 1953, defining the terms "Age" and "Epoch."

In the chapter titled [The Heart and Nerve Centre](#) in her book [The Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith](#), Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm describes this meeting...

In January 1949 [Mr. Ben Gurion](#), the Prime Minister of the [Provisional Government](#), came to Haifa on his first official visit and the [Mayor](#) naturally invited Shoghi Effendi to attend the reception being given in his honour by the Municipality. The dilemma was acute, for if the Guardian did not go, it would, with every reason, be taken as an affront to the new Government, and if he did go he would inevitably be submerged in a sea of people where any pretence at protocol would be swept away (this was indeed the case, as my father, Shoghi Effendi's representative, reported after he returned from this reception). The Guardian therefore decided that as he would not be attending, but was more than willing to show courtesy to the Prime Minister of the new State, he would call upon him in person.

With great difficulty this was arranged through the good offices of the [Mayor of Haifa, Shabatay Levy](#), as [Mr. Ben Gurion](#)'s time in Haifa was very short and it was only two days before the first general election in the new State.

The interview took place on Friday evening, January 21st, in the private home the Prime Minister was staying in on Mt. Carmel and lasted about fifteen minutes. [Ben Gurion](#) enquired about the Faith and Shoghi Effendi's relation to it and asked if there was a book he could read; Shoghi Effendi answered his questions and assured him he would send him a copy of his own book [God Passes By](#) — which he later did, and which was acknowledged with thanks. Typical of the whole history of the Cause and the constant problems that beset it was a long article which appeared in the leading English-language newspaper on December 20, 1948, in which, in the most favourable terms, its teachings were set forth and the station of Shoghi Effendi as its World Head mentioned. On January 28, 1949, there appeared in the letter column of this paper a short and extraordinary statement, signed "Bahai U.N. Observer", which flatly refuted the article and asserted, "Mr. Rabbani is not the Guardian of the Bahai faith, nor its World Leader" and gave the [New History Society](#) in New York as a source of further information

As there was no such thing as a "Bahai U.N. Observer" this move was plainly inspired by the once-more hopeful [band of old Covenant-breakers](#), who sought, at the outset of a new regime, to blacken Shoghi Effendi's reputation and divert attention from his station by referring to [Ahmad Sohrab](#)'s rootless group in America. At a later date, when in 1952 the [Covenant-breakers](#) in [Bahji](#) brought their case in the local courts against Shoghi Effendi for the demolition of an old building near the [Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh](#), [Sohrab](#) sought, unsuccessfully, to bring pressure on the [Minister of Religious Affairs](#) to discredit the Bahá'í claims. It was with attacks such as this, both open and covert, that the Guardian, on the threshold of a new phase in the development of the affairs of the Faith at its World Centre, once more had to content.

It had long been the desire of Shoghi Effendi to obtain control of the [Mansion at Mazra'ih](#), where Bahá'u'lláh had first lived when He quitted once-for-all the walls of the prison-city of 'Akka. This property was a [Muslim religious endowment](#) and had now fallen vacant. It was planned by the government to turn it into a rest home for officials. All efforts, through the departments concerned, to procure this property were unavailing until Shoghi Effendi appealed directly to [Ben Gurion](#), explaining its significance to the Bahá'ís and his desire to have it visited by pilgrims as a place so closely associated with Bahá'u'lláh. The [Prime Minister](#) himself then intervened in the matter and it was leased to the Bahá'ís as an historic

site. Shoghi Effendi proudly informed the Bahá'í world, on December 16, 1950, that its keys had been delivered to us, by the Israeli authorities, after the lapse of more than fifty years.

The affairs of the Bahá'í Community, in matters concerning its day-to-day dealings with the government in connection with the work at the World Centre, had been placed under the jurisdiction of the [Ministry of Religious Affairs](#) and was at first handled by the head of the Department that dealt with Muslim affairs. This Shoghi Effendi violently objected to as it implied the Faith was in some way identified with Islam. After much negotiation a letter was received from the Minister of Religious Affairs, dated December 13, 1953, addressed to "His Eminence, Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, World Head of the Bahá'í Faith" in which he said:

"...I am pleased to inform you of my decision to establish in our Ministry a separate Department for the Bahá'í Faith. I hope that this department will be of assistance to you in matters concerning the Bahá'í Centre in our State.

In the name of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the State of Israel, I wish to assure Your Eminence that full protection will be given to the Holy Places as well as to the World Centre of the Bahá'í Faith."

The victory was all the more welcome, following as it did the previously mentioned court case against Shoghi Effendi brought on a technicality by the [Covenant-breakers](#) in connection with the demolition of a house adjoining the [Shrine and Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh in Bahji](#). Never tired of seeking to publicly humiliate and discredit the Head of the Faith, be it 'Abdu'l-Bahá or the Guardian, they had had the temerity to summon Shoghi Effendi to appear in court as a witness. Once more, greatly concerned for the honour of the Cause at its World Centre, Shoghi Effendi appealed direct to the Prime Minister, sending as his representatives the President, [Secretary-General and Member-at-Large](#) of the [International Bahá'í Council](#) (whom he had summoned from Italy for this purpose) to Jerusalem on more than one visit to press the strategy he himself had devised. These representations were successful and on the grounds of its being a purely religious issue it was removed by Government from the jurisdiction of the civil courts. As soon as the plaintiffs found their plan to humiliate Shoghi Effendi had been forestalled, they were willing to settle the case by negotiation. That the authorities and the Bahá'í Community were equally pleased by this conclusion of the matter is shown in these letters written to the Guardian by members of the Prime Minister's staff — two men to whom the Faith owed much for their sympathetic efforts on its behalf at that time:

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE Jerusalem, 19th May, 1952. His Eminence Shoghi Rabbani,

World Head of the Bahá'í Faith,

Haifa. Your Eminence, I am instructed to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 16th May addressed to the Prime Minister. As you are no doubt aware, the dispute between yourself as the World head of the Bahá'í Faith and members of the family of the founder of the Faith has found its solution and there is no need, therefore, to take any administrative action in order to solve the problem. May I express to you our gratitude for your wise and benevolent attitude taken in the dispute which enabled us to impose a just and, as we hope, a lasting solution on the dissident group? The Prime Minister assures you of his personal esteem and sends you his best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

S. Eynath

Legal Adviser

The second letter was from [Walter Eytan](#), Director-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and was written to Shoghi Effendi the following day. In it he says: "...Having done my best throughout to be of assistance to Your Eminence in the solution of these vexing problems, I heard with great satisfaction this morning that complete agreement had been reached. I sincerely trust that this puts an end to a period of anxiety for Your Eminence and the members of the Bahá'í Faith, and that you will now be able to proceed with your plans without further interference from any quarter."

It is significant to note that they address Shoghi Effendi as "His Eminence", a title which, though still far below what his position merited, was the one that had been introduced in the earliest days of his ministry, but never really used by any officials until the formation of the Jewish State.

The cordial nature of the relations established between the Guardian and the officials of the State of Israel encouraged Shoghi Effendi to ascertain if the President would care to visit the Bahá'í Shrine in Haifa; when word was received that he would accept such an invitation, Shoghi Effendi formally invited him to do so and arrangements were made for the morning of April 26, 1954, at which time, the Director of the President's Office wrote to Shoghi Effendi, the President would "be pleased to pay you an official visit". Accordingly the [President](#) and his wife arrived at the [home of the Master](#), attended by two officials, partook of light refreshment and were presented by the Guardian with a Persian album, painted with miniatures and bound in silver, containing some photographs of the Shrines,

as a memento of their visit. The Presidential party, with Shoghi Effendi and those who accompanied him, then proceeded to the gardens on Mt. Carmel. It was the first time in the history of the Cause that the Head of an independent nation had ever made an official visit of this kind and it constituted another milestone in the development of the World Centre of the Faith. The [President](#) and his companions showed the greatest respect to the [Shrine of the Bab](#), removing their shoes as we did, before entering it, the men keeping their hats on out of reverence as Jews for a holy place; it was a very moving moment to see [President Ben Zvi](#) standing beside Shoghi Effendi, the former with his European hat, the latter with his simple black fez, before the threshold. After a few words of explanation from Shoghi Effendi we all withdrew and walked about the gardens for a few minutes before saying good-bye in front of the [Oriental Pilgrim House](#) where the [President's](#) car was awaiting him.

On April 29th the [President](#) wrote personally to the Guardian: "I should like to express my thanks for your kind hospitality and for the interesting time I spent with you visiting the beautiful Gardens and remarkable Shrine... I do appreciate the friendship which the Bahá'í Community has for Israel and it is my sincere hope that we may all live to see the strengthening of amity between all peoples on earth." On May 5th the Guardian replied to this letter in equally warm terms: "...It was a great pleasure to meet [Your Excellency](#) and [Mrs. Ben Zvi](#), and be able to show you one of our places of Bahá'í pilgrimage in Israel... If it suits your convenience, [Mrs. Rabbani](#) and I, accompanied by [Mr. Ioas](#), would like to call upon [Your Excellency](#) and [Mrs. Ben Zvi](#) in Jerusalem..." The time for this return call was set for the afternoon of May 26th and we had tea and a pleasant conversation with the [President](#) and [his wife](#), in her own way as much a personality as her husband and equally nice. In the interim between these two visits Shoghi Effendi had sent to the [President](#) some Bahá'í books which he had promised him and these had been acknowledged with the thanks of the [President](#) and the assurance that he would read them with great interest. Ever meticulous in all matters, Shoghi Effendi wrote on June 3rd to the [President](#): "I wish to thank you and [Mrs. Ben Zvi](#) for your kind hospitality. [Mrs. Rabbani](#) and I enjoyed our visit with you very much, and I feel sure that this opportunity we have had of visiting with you our Bahá'í Holy Places and calling upon you in the capital of Israel has served to reinforce the bonds of affection and esteem which unite the Bahá'ís to the people and Government of Israel. With kind regards to you and Mrs. Ben Zvi..." Thus ended another memorable chapter in the process of winning recognition for the Faith at its World Centre.

On January 18, 1953, a [letter](#) written by Hand of the Cause of God [Leroy Ioas](#) on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, later referenced in a [Bahai News](#) article in March 1953, defined the terms

"Age" and "Epoch." He had served as a member of the NSA of the US, a member of the [International Bahá'í Council](#), and a [Custodian](#). Among other roles, he had accompanied Shoghi Effendi and Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum for their May 26, 1952, visit of Israeli President [Yitzhak Ben-Zvi](#).

LETTER FROM HAIFA

DEFINES "AGES"

AND "EPOCHS"

In a letter dated January 18, 1953,
written on behalf of the Guardian by
[Leroy loas](#), Assistant Secretary, the
terms "age" and "epoch" as used
by the Guardian are defined.

"The Faith is divided into three
Ages, the [Heroic](#), the [Formative](#), the
[Golden Age](#), as has been outlined in
his writings. The Heroic Age closed
with the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Baha.

The Formative Age is divided into
epochs. The first epoch lasted 25
years. We are now actually in the
second epoch of the Formative Age.

How long the Formative Age will
last is not known - and there will
probably be a number of epochs in

it.

"The Divine Plan of 'Abdu'l-Baha

is divided into [epochs](#). The first Seven

Year Plan constituted the first

stage of the [first epoch](#); the second

Seven Year Plan constitutes the second

stage; while the [ten year Crusade](#)

will constitute the third stage

of the [first epoch](#) of the Divine Plan.

The [first epoch](#) of the Divine Plan

will conclude with the conclusion of

the [ten year Crusade](#)."

-NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY



Comments

September 19. On this date in 1919, 'Alí-Yulláh Nakhjavání was born in Baku, Azerbaijan. He would serve as a member of the Universal House of Justice from 1963 until his retirement in 2003.

submitted19 days ago by A35821363

September 19. On this date in 1919, 'Alí-Yulláh Nakhjavání was born in Baku, Azerbaijan. He would serve as a member of the Universal House of Justice from 1963 until his retirement in 2003.

Ali Nakhjavani was born on September 19, 1919 in Baku, Azerbaijan to Ali-Akbar Nakhjavani and Fatimih Khanum, both Bahá'ís. After his father's death around 1921, when he was two, his family was advised by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to move to Haifa, where he grew up. In 1939 he received the Bachelor of Arts degree with distinction from the American University of Beirut, and then in the early 1940s he moved to Iran, residing first in Tehran, then Tabriz and finally in Shiraz. In 1950 he was elected to the Bahá'í National Spiritual Assembly of Iran, where he served until the following year.

In 1951, Ali Nakhjavání and his family moved to Uganda to assist with the development of the Bahá'í community in that country; while he was there he worked as a teacher and lecturer. During his early years there, Enoch Olinga joined the religion, and in 1953 Nakhjavání, and his wife along with Olinga and two other Bahá'ís travelled from Uganda to Cameroon to help spread the Bahá'í Faith in Cameroon. From 1954 to 1961 he was a member of the Auxiliary Board for the spread of the religion in Africa, and later, from 1956 to 1961, he was elected to the Bahá'í National Spiritual Assembly of Central and East Africa, the Bahá'í governing body for the region.

In 1961, Nakhjavání was elected to the International Bahá'í Council — the forerunner to the Universal House of Justice — and thus moved to Haifa. In 1963 he was elected to the Universal House of Justice during its inaugural convention, and served as a member of that

body until 2003. Ali Nakhjavání was married to [Violette Nakhjavání](#) (daughter of Hand of the Cause of God [Músá Banání](#)) and they had one daughter, Bahiyyih, and one son, Mehran.

'Alí-Yulláh Nakhjavání died in his home in France on October 11, 2019.



Comments

September 19. On this date in 1946, Shoghi Effendi wrote "that the youth, in particular, must constantly and determinedly strive to exemplify a Bahá'í life. In the world around us we see moral decay, promiscuity, indecency, vulgarity, bad manners--the Bahá'í young people must be the opposite ..."

submitted 19 days ago by A35821363

September 19. On this date in 1946, a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi [stated](#) "He feels that the youth, in particular, must constantly and determinedly strive to exemplify a Bahá'í life. In the world around us we see moral decay, promiscuity, indecency, vulgarity, bad manners--the Bahá'í young people must be the opposite of these things, and, by their chastity, their uprightness, their decency, their consideration and good manners, attract others, old and young, to the Faith. The world is tired of words; it wants example, and it is up to the Bahá'í youth to furnish it."

[2286](#). He feels that the youth, in particular, must constantly and determinedly strive to exemplify a Bahá'í life. In the world around us we see moral decay, promiscuity, indecency, vulgarity, bad manners--the Bahá'í young people must be the opposite of these things, and, by their chastity, their uprightness, their decency, their consideration and good manners, attract others, old and young, to the Faith. The world is tired of words; it wants example, and it is up to the Bahá'í youth to furnish it.

(19 September 1946 to the Green Acre Bahá'í Summer School)



Comments

September 19. On this date in 1957, Shoghi Effendi wrote to Jean Sevin, named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for his pioneering to Tuamotu, the he approves his "returning to Tuamotu, to which he attaches great importance."

submitted 19 days ago by A35821363

September 19. On this date in 1957, [a letter](#) addressed on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to Jean Sevin, named a [Knight of Bahá'u'lláh](#) for his pioneering to [Tuamotu](#), stated that Shoghi Effendi "approves of your plan of remaining in Tahiti with your father and assisting in the work there; and later going to France for a visit, and returning to [Tuamotu](#), to which he attaches great importance."

What has always struck me about the designation of Knights of Bahá'u'lláh is the arbitrariness with which the "virgin territories" were defined. For example, the [Cook Islands](#) and [Tonga Island](#), both part of the [Realm of New Zealand](#) have distinct sets of Knights, while [Niue](#) and the [Chatham Islands](#), also part of the [Realm of New Zealand](#), are Knightless.

Several islands off the coast of Alaska have distinct Knights, like [Baranof Island](#) , Kodiak Island, and the [Aleutian Islands](#). Yet other Alaskan islands, like the [Pribilof Islands](#) are Knightless.

The Brazilian state of [Amapá](#) has its own Knights (for [Portuguese Guiana](#)), while the other [Brazilian states](#) are Knightless.

Crete and Rhodes have Knights distinct from the Knights of mainland Greece, yet other Greek islands, like Santorini and Samos, are Knightless.

Key West has its own Knight, yet the other Florida Keys are Knightless.

Tiny islands, like Grand Manan, have their own Knights. St. Thomas Island has its own Knight, yet the remaining Leeward Islands have one set of Knights, representing numerous politically and geographically independent islands. Similarly, the Windward Islands have one set of Knights, representing numerous politically and geographically independent islands.



Comments

September 20. On this date in 1935, William Hatcher was born. A mathematician, philosopher, educator, he served on the NSAs of Canada, Switzerland, and Russia, and was Chair of Department of Ethics at the now-defunct Landegg International University.

submitted 17 days ago by A35821363

September 20. On this date in 1935, [William Hatcher](#) was born. A mathematician, philosopher, educator, he served on the NSAs of Canada, Switzerland, and Russia, and was Chair of Department of Ethics at the now-defunct [Landegg International University](#). His attempts to prove God's existence largely mirrors the works of medieval Islamic scholars, such as [Ibn Sina](#)'s formal argument known as the [Proof of the Truthful](#).



Comments

September 20. On this date in 1948, Shoghi Effendi wrote "Any intelligent person must be wondering what you are wondering...If men refuse...God's Manifestation for this age and accepting Him, then they will bring upon themselves a fresh crisis in human affairs and very great affliction."

submitted 17 days ago by A35821363

September 20. On this date in 1948, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#) a British Bahá'í that "Any intelligent person must be wondering what you are wondering...If men refuse...God's Manifestation for this age and accepting Him, then they will bring upon themselves a fresh crisis in human affairs and very great affliction."

[20 September 1948](#)

He (the Guardian) is very happy indeed to see the change in your attitude and to hear that you are now not only a recognised member of our Faith, but a prospective Bahá'í [pioneer](#)!

It is quite natural for anyone, observing the present state of the world, to feel very depressed and apprehensive of the future. Any intelligent person must be wondering what you are wondering. It is indeed hard to see what lies ahead of us in the near future--but we, as Bahá'ís, unlike most people, have absolute assurance that the distant future is serene and bright. We do not know if there will be another Great War; what we do know is this: that unless people become spiritually awakened in time, great suffering, maybe in the form of war, will come upon them, for humanity must be unified, must be redeemed. If men refuse absolutely to take the easier road of faith, of seeking out God's Manifestation for this age and accepting Him, then they will bring upon themselves a fresh crisis in human affairs and very great affliction. What we, as Bahá'ís, must do is our duty; we cannot

do other people's duty for them, alas, but we can fulfil our own sacred responsibilities by serving our fellow-men, living a Bahá'í life, teaching the Faith, and strengthening its budding [world order](#).

He urges you, just as you have surmounted the crisis in your own life, through faith and courage, to now go out and serve the Cause with that same faith and courage. We must leave to God the final reckoning with His creatures today--but meantime we must give them His Message.



Comments

September 20. On this date in 1973, the UHJ wrote an NSA "when the Sacred Writings are published the standard English translation should be used, but there would be no objection to printing alongside it the translation into simple English which should be described as a paraphrase of the Holy Word.

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Translation of Bahá'í Literature into Everyday Language-- Simplifications and Paraphrasing
Not to be Published as Scripture

"The Universal House of Justice, in response to your letter of 20 April concerning translations into French or Creole using simpler words than the original text, has requested us to send the following three quotations. These make it clear that a quotation in English may be rendered into simple English in order to facilitate its translation into another language or dialect. However, it is not permissible to publish simplifications and paraphrased extracts of Bahá'í Writings as Bahá'í Scripture.

'We have noticed a tendency in a number of countries to attempt to translate Bahá'í literature into the current, easy, everyday language of the country. This, however, should not be an overriding consideration. Many of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh and Abdu'l-Bahá are in exalted and highly poetic language in the original Persian and Arabic and you will see, for example, that when translating Bahá'u'lláh's Writings into English the beloved Guardian

did not use present-day colloquial English but evolved a highly poetic and beautiful style, using numbers of archaic expressions reminiscent of the translations of the Bible.' (From a letter dated 7 October 1973 written by the Universal House of Justice to a National Spiritual Assembly)

'Obviously teaching literature and books about the Faith can be written in simple English. However, we feel that when the Sacred Writings are published the standard English translation should be used, but there would be no objection to printing alongside it the translation into simple English which should be described as a paraphrase of the Holy Word. Thus, for the people of ... who have difficulty in comprehending standard English, the simple English version would be in the nature of an explanation of the Writings which they could understand. In the case of teaching literature in which quotations from the Writings appear, these could either be paraphrased or a simple English version could be used with the standard version printed as a footnote. This method would also provide a means whereby the people of ... could improve their knowledge and understanding of the English language.' (From a letter dated 20 September 1973 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to a National Spiritual Assembly)

'It is, of course, permissible to translate Bahá'í Writings into other languages and dialects of languages. It is also possible to simplify or paraphrase the Bahá'í Writings in order to facilitate their translation into languages and dialects having small vocabularies. However, it is not permissible to publish simplifications and paraphrases of Bahá'í Writings as Bahá'í Scripture.'" (From a letter dated 13 March 1969 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to a National Spiritual Assembly)

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to the Spiritual Assembly of Guadeloupe, May 13, 1986)

To summarize rules of Bahá'í translations...

Arabic works cannot be translated into Persian.

Persian works cannot be translated into Arabic.

Persian and Arabic works can be translated "into Oriental languages such as Turkish and Urdu."

Persian and Arabic works can be translated into English.

Persian and Arabic works cannot be translated into non-English "European languages."

English works can be translated into non-English "European languages."

For further reading, please see ["Persian, Arabic, and Provisional Translations"](#), ["Translation and provisional translations"](#), ["Unveiling the Hidden Words, by Diana Malouf: Commentary on 'Translating the Hidden Words,' review by Franklin Lewis"](#), a [letter dated June 27, 1933](#) from Shoghi Effendi to [Adelbert Mühlischlegel](#) about [Bahá'í orthography](#), a [letter dated June 30, 1999](#) from the Universal House of Justice outlining its procedures for approving provisional as opposed to authorized translations, and a [letter dated February 15, 1957](#) from Shoghi Effendi to French Bahá'ís.



Comments

September 20. On this date in 1975, the NSA of Panama asked the UHJ about books by William Miller and Hermann Zimmer. William Miller translated the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, which was published by the Royal Asiatic Society in 1961, three decades before the officially-sanctioned translation in 1992.

submitted17 days ago by A35821363

September 20. On this date in 1975, the National Spiritual Assembly of Panama [wrote](#) to the Universal House of Justice asking about books by [William Miller](#) and [Hermann Zimmer](#). [William Miller](#) translated the [Kitáb-i-Aqdas](#), which was published by the [Royal Asiatic Society](#) in 1961, three decades before the [Bahá'í Administration](#)'s officially-sanctioned translation in 1992. [Hermann Zimmer](#) was an early pioneer of the Bahá'í Faith in Germany who, like [Ruth White](#) and other Free Bahá'ís, believed that the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was a forgery, based on hand writing analysis by the criminologist [C. Ainsworth Mitchell](#) as well as the belief that the nascent [Bahá'í Administration](#) being formed under the auspices of Shoghi Effendi was against the teachings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The Universal House of Justice advised "that the friends should be advised to ignore these books and any similar ones which might be written by enemies of the Faith."

[627. Literature Written by Enemies of the Faith](#)

"In reply to your letter of September 20, 1975, the Universal House of Justice instructs us to say that **the friends should be advised to ignore these books and any similar ones which might be written by enemies of the Faith**. There should certainly be no attempt made to destroy or remove such books from libraries. On the other hand there is no need at all for the friends to acquire them and, indeed, the best plan is to ignore them entirely."

(Referring to books by Hermann Zimmer and William Miller. Letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of Panama, October 2, 1975)



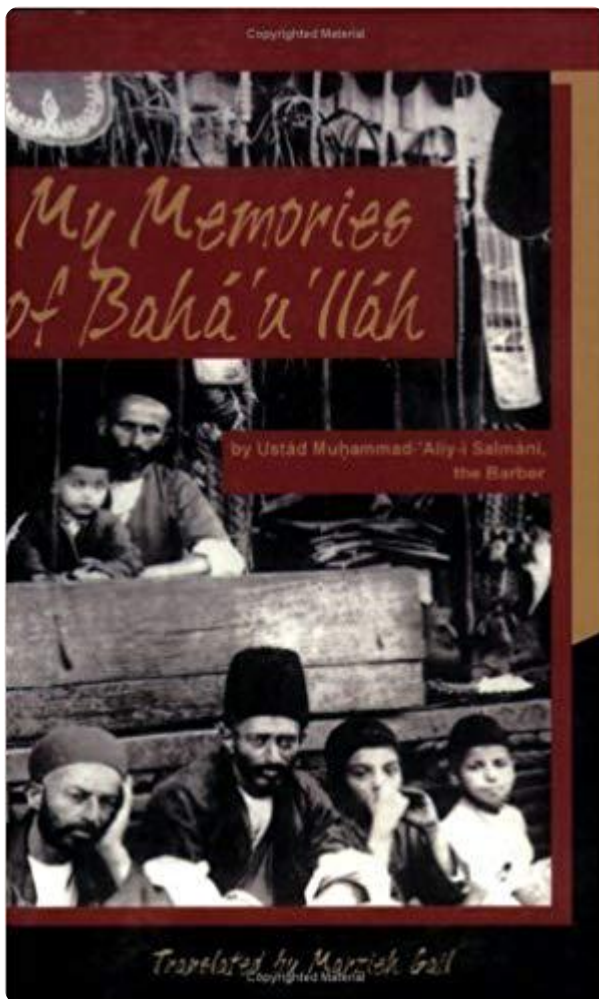
Comments

September 20. On this date in 1982, the UHJ wrote Kalimát Press about the publication of Ustad Salmani's "My Memories of Bahá'u'lláh" noting it "untimely and unwise" due to passages where believers refer to him as "You being God, Uncle" and other "unpleasant and unworthy" stories.

submitted17 days agobyA35821363

September 20. On this date in 1982, the UHJ [wrote](#) (also [here](#)) Kalimát Press about the publication of Ustad Salmani's [My Memories of Bahá'u'lláh](#) noting it "untimely and unwise" due to passages where believers refer to him as "You being God, Uncle" and other "unpleasant and unworthy" stories.

<https://www.h-net.org/~bahai/docs/vol6/salmuhj.htm>



Comments

September 20. On this date in 1993, "a Group of concerned Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Straight Bahá'ís and their friends" addressed an open letter to the NSA of the U.S. addressing such topics as "Fear and ignorance of homosexuals within the Bahá'í Community" and "A Moral Double Standard".

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September 20, 1993 To The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís United States From a Group of concerned Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Straight Bahá'ís and their friends Dear Friends,

The Bahá'ís and their friends who gathered in Reno, Nevada from the 3rd to the 5th of September, 1993 want to sincerely thank the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States for supporting this historic gathering. Without your love and support, this weekend could not have occurred. For many of us, it was the first opportunity to speak honestly about the pain, hurt, and confusion we experience because of the lack of tolerance and acceptance of us from our Bahá'í brothers and sisters. Our devotions on Sunday morning included the naming of the many people we once knew who had passed on due to suicide or complications from AIDS, and the recitation of the long healing prayer for their souls and the success of this meeting.

The lives of so many precious friends so tragically cut short gave a special gravity to our gathering. We all experienced a powerful sense of urgency that some new openness and understanding be reached, not only for our own well being, but for the sake of future generations of gay men and lesbians, and further, for the good of the Faith itself. Many of us have been in hiding from our Bahá'í communities, we have all been made to feel unwelcome in our own religion. For a few of us, it seems that alienation, confusion, and despair has been too heavy a burden to bear.

We began with prayers for assistance and by affirming that we are all strong in the covenant, and want to fully support all the Institutions of the Bahá'í Faith. After a weekend of at times painful, open and frank consultation we have produced, as requested by the National Spiritual Assembly, a list of recommendations. The recommendations that follow were taken from individuals throughout the weekend and refined somewhat in final consultation at the close of the weekend. We wish to emphasize that each of the members who put their name to this letter may not agree with all the details of every suggestion. We respectfully seek your guidance, prayers, and support. As well, we humbly, but honestly offer our own unique perspective for your consultation on this issue.

Many of us believe that this issue revolves around the Bahá'í principle of the reconciliation of science and religion. From very real experience, people described their own painful and expensive efforts to change their sexual orientation through counseling and other therapies. This notwithstanding, the advice of therapists who repeatedly point out that all accredited branches of medicine and psychology agree that homosexuality is a normally occurring variation in nature. None of us has found in all our efforts any evidence whatsoever that a homosexual can be changed into a heterosexual by medicine or psychological treatments. Our personal experience supports the accepted view of science. And now, more recent data strongly suggests that sexual orientation is not only non-pathogenic, but prenatal, in fact in part genetically determined. How then is a Bahá'í to reconcile this issue? On the one side, a person's unchangeable sexual and emotional needs, supported wholeheartedly by medicine and psychology and further strengthened by a global movement in Gay and Lesbian rights. On the other side, the morality and censure of their chosen Faith. This is no small dilemma.

Some members of our gathering voiced a desire that, being as gay people have an impossibly difficult set of tests, the National Spiritual Assembly might be appealed to for a "kinder and gentler" approach. Perhaps, with a bit more compassion and mercy, the sex life of homosexuals could be left alone as something personal between themselves and God as long as their behavior did not cause a real public scandal by a 1990's standard.

Other members see this issue in a more liberated light, seeking to sweep aside antiquated homophobic obstructions to the happiness of gay men and lesbians. By this standard of clear scientific facts and modern humanist ideals, homosexuality is seen to be a totally natural and normal variation for a portion of the population and utterly free of any moral stigma. These bravely idealistic Friends would look for the Faith to ultimately accept marital relationships between life partners exactly as in heterosexual marriage. Whatever the future holds, we all agreed to appeal to the National Spiritual Assembly for some new guidance and a change in the sad and frustrating status quo. We respectfully recommend, in light of a number of deaths from suicide and AIDS and the growing number of HIV positive believers in the American Bahá'í community, that the National Spiritual Assembly take action to foster the acceptance of all gay and lesbian people as whole individuals in the Bahá'í Faith, and to include them completely in Bahá'í community life.

In recent decades homosexuality has emerged from centuries of unspeakable repression blossoming almost overnight into a worldwide movement of liberation and civil rights. During the Inquisition, homosexuals were tortured and killed as satanic heretics. Lesbians have been reviled, hated, and burned as witches. Countless thousands of gay men and lesbians were herded into railroad cars by the Nazis never to be seen again. Not long ago, people were "committed" to asylums by their families for electric shock treatments and strapped to tables for lobotomies simply because their desires did not conform to the majority. It is any wonder that people so terribly oppressed would be receptive to the healing message of Bahá'u'lláh? Can it be that the same pervasive winds of change affecting the entire world, opening peoples eyes to oppression, hoisting the banner of justice, eliminating prejudices of all kinds, can it be that this liberating wind has blown in an unanticipated direction? It seems exactly that way from our perspective. It is obvious that a new world order is being created before our very eyes. We simply ask to be allowed to be a part of the work of building it. We respectfully offer the following points for your consultation.

1) Fear and ignorance of homosexuals within the Bahá'í Community: Our experience suggests that there are large numbers of gays and lesbians in the Bahá'í Faith. Furthermore, many heterosexual Bahá'ís are supportive of gays and lesbians. Insofar as there are no known therapies to alter a person's sexual orientation, the friends and Institutions of the Faith should show greater compassion and forbearance in regarding homosexual Bahá'ís. We recommend that Bahá'ís whose sexual orientation is homosexual, should be encouraged to strive to uphold the same standard as any other Bahá'í (to live a chaste and holy life). In the words of the beloved Guardian,

Only when an individual's behavior becomes a matter of genuine public scandal, such as in the case of public sexual behavior, which would result in general public condemnation and scandal; should administrative action be taken, and then with great constraint. (ref. letter from the Guardian 20 August 1955).

An atmosphere of trust, understanding, tolerance, and love, in which gay and lesbian Bahá'ís are treated, as all human beings, in a fair and unprejudiced manner should be encouraged. Since Bahá'ís are exhorted to avoid prejudicial behavior in general (See: Goals for current 3 Year Plan), we would like to see attitudes of love, understanding, and compassion combined with a sense of justice and fair-mindedness practiced by every Bahá'í community. We believe this is a critical step in approaching the issue of homosexuality, and a vital step if the Bahá'í community is to overcome all obstacles to the oneness of humanity as envisioned by the Blessed Beauty.

2) A Moral Double Standard: Gay or lesbian Bahá'ís need support in their individual search for peace and truth to best live the life given to him/her by the creator in a society filled with so much prejudice and hatred. The issue of private behavior is a most sacred and personal issue between the individual and God. We request Bahá'í institutions and communities to resist the temptation to judge us so harshly, inasmuch as no one truly knows the life, the feelings, needs, and tests of another. Our own experience is that often the perceived "sinner" was subject to backbiting, intolerance, and unkindness by Bahá'ís who righteously believed these acts were in the best interest of preserving the image of the Faith.

We see an obvious inequity in the uneven application of "sexual misconduct" standards in the same community between heterosexuals and homosexuals: perceived transgressions by gay and lesbian Bahá'ís usually result in the removal of administrative rights while similar acts of heterosexuality receive more lenient treatment or are ignored altogether. Also, homosexual Bahá'ís are treated different from one community to the next, leading to inconsistencies in the application of sanctions among Bahá'í communities.

We recommend that all cases where rights have been removed be reviewed and reassessed in light of current knowledge on this subject, and that action be taken to bring all gay and lesbian believers (active and/or inactive) back into their communities with an attitude of love and acceptance.

3) A Committee on Homosexuality: We recommend that a committee, consisting of professional, sensitive, learned, and well respected, gay male, lesbian, and heterosexual Bahá'ís should be established to develop a positive course of action, response, and

support for the gay and lesbian friends, the general Bahá'í community, and families of homosexuals. The group should be directed to develop a plan to enlighten and educate the American Bahá'í community concerning homosexuality, and to assist the American Bahá'í community to study recent developments in AIDS, sexuality, psychology, and medical research on the subject.

4) BPFLAG: We recommend the establishment of a Bahá'í Parents and Friends of Gays and Lesbians (BPFLAG), which would be modeled after PFLAG, an international organization sponsored by many churches and other organizations worldwide. This would include the development and dissemination of literature describing resources available to Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís alike regarding the Bahá'í view of tolerance and forbearance towards all people, and gay and lesbian people in particular.

5) Speakers Bureau: In conjunction with the above goal, the Gay Bahá'í Fellowship (which is a teaching institute that educates and supports gay and lesbian Bahá'ís and people who are HIV+), would be pleased to provide a resource to the Bahá'í community that can create and foster greater compassion and understanding on this subject. There are many volunteers, willing to share their experience with Bahá'í communities seeking information on homosexuality. This could include educational programs for communities who request it, at Bahá'í schools, etc. As well, we are developing a video tape that may be useful in this respect.

6) A Clear Statement About Whether Gays and Lesbians are Welcome in the Bahá'í Faith: We are deeply concerned that serious damage is being done to the reputation of the Bahá'í Faith. Large numbers of gays, lesbians, and their friends are attracted to this religion, but will not enroll, and ultimately lose interest because of the official stand on this issue. Many people and organizations view our stand on homosexuality as inconsistent with the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith. We are concerned as well as to its consequences for the propagation of the Faith amongst members of the larger progressive religious community, human rights organizations, and the scientific community as a whole. This growing and extremely negative impression of the Bahá'í Faith is a direct result of fear of homosexuality (homophobia) and its resulting intolerance. This impression is reinforced by actions which have been taken by the institutions of the Faith which leave many individuals seeking support and comfort among non-Bahá'ís who can not understand. We feel the prevailing misinformation, negative attitudes, and harmful stereotypes in many Bahá'í communities towards homosexuality is doing serious and possibly irreparable damage to the Cause of God.

7) We recommend that Auxiliary Board Members and their Assistants should be provided appropriate, up to date materials, resources, and background on this subject. We are concerned that the focus to date has been one of "changing" sexual orientation which is not a reachable goal, in light of current scientific findings.

8) We Request the National Spiritual Assembly to instruct individual Local Spiritual Assemblies to discontinue encouraging marriage as a cure for homosexuality. This recommendation, carried out by well intentioned Bahá'ís has produced disastrous and painful consequences for spouses, children, and families. We seek, and pray for an open attitude towards, and the discussion of the effects of HIV in the American Bahá'í community. In light of the dramatic and worldwide devastation of AIDS, lists of resources and support organizations should be made available for all Bahá'í institutions and individuals, as soon as is possible.

9) We are willing to come to Wilmette and consult with the National Spiritual Assembly about these recommendations. We look forward to and pray for reconciliation and healing in the Bahá'í community on this issue.

Again, we thank you, from the bottom of our hearts for supporting our efforts to gather and consult about these vitally important issues in an atmosphere of trust, safety, and love.
>We also want to thank the Local Spiritual Assembly of Reno, xxxx, and members of the Gay Bahá'í Fellowship for organizing this historic weekend.

Be assured of our continued love, and faithfulness in service to the Cause of God.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the following participants,

Daniel Orey [other names deleted]



Comments

September 20. On this date in 1994, an individual wrote the UHJ "concerning the degrees of authority possessed by Bahá'í historical sources, the process by which translations are authorized, the development of a "canon of Bahá'í doctrine," the status of documents prepared by the Research Department

submitted 17 days ago by A35821363

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The Universal House of Justice Department of the Secretariat 15 December 1994

[To an individual]

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

Your **letter of 20 September 1994 to ... , concerning the degrees of authority possessed by Bahá'í historical sources, the process by which translations are authorized, the development of a "canon of Bahá'í doctrine," the status of documents prepared by the Research Department**, and your request for various materials, was forwarded to the Universal House of Justice for its consideration. We are instructed to make the following reply to your questions numbered two, three and five. The remaining questions were referred to the Research Department for study. The enclosed memorandum and attachments represent the result of the deliberations of that Department.

Your questions concerning translation revolve around **two major issues: the process by which new translations into the English language are authorized and the authority of the translations of Shoghi Effendi.** We are asked to state that **a translation is regarded as authorized when it is approved by one or more translation committees appointed by the Universal House of Justice.** While members of the Research Department may well, from time to time, be appointed to serve on such a translation committee, the authorization of new translations is currently not one of the responsibilities assigned to the Research Department by the House of Justice. Further, the approval of a translation does not mean that improvements or amendments cannot be made to it in the future. As you, yourself, note, even Shoghi Effendi described his translation of the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* as

... one more attempt to introduce to the West, in a language however inadequate, this book of unsurpassed pre-eminence among the writings of the Author of the Bahá'í Revelation. The hope is that it may assist others in their efforts to approach what must always be regarded as the unattainable goal—a befitting rendering of Bahá'u'lláh's matchless utterance.

As to the policy concerning the publication of new translations of the Writings made by individual Bahá'ís, **we are instructed to convey the fact that translations into English and revisions of earlier translations in that language must be checked by a translation committee at the Bahá'í World Centre and officially approved for publication.** While individuals are permitted to paraphrase or describe the contents of the passages they have translated and to include them in their manuscripts, without reference to the World Center, **new translations need to be submitted to the Universal House of Justice for checking and approval prior to publication. The importance of this policy lies in the fact that translations into most other languages are based on the approved English texts and are not made directly or solely from the original texts.** There have been, however, occasions when the House of Justice has permitted the publication of provisional translations made by individuals whose work is known to it. In these cases the translations usually appear in scholarly or other publications of limited distribution and are not likely to be used as a basis for translations into other languages.

You ask whether the translations of Shoghi Effendi should be considered as the “standard” and whether, because of his function as infallible interpreter, the Guardian’s translations provide “the true interpretation of the Writings.” We are asked to call attention to the Introduction to *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas* where the Universal House of Justice describes the essential qualities of the Guardian’s translations and the fact

that they “are illumined by his uniquely inspired understanding of the purport and implications of the originals.”

In view of your observations that “the chain of interpretation is unbroken, from the Báb to Bahá’u’lláh to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to Shoghi Effendi,” and that “the ‘authorized’ interpretation of the Writings ends with the Guardian,” you ask about the possibility of establishing a “canon of Bahá’í doctrine which could then be regarded as ‘authorized’ and ‘official,’” and which would serve as a means by which “truth could be separated from falsehood according to the divinely revealed and interpreted standard.” In this regard, the House of Justice asks us to state that, while it would be possible to codify and cross-reference the Bahá’í teachings, it would also be important to take into account such functions assigned to the Universal House of Justice in the Bahá’í Writings as its role in elucidating all matters “which have not outwardly been revealed in the Book” and in ensuring the essential flexibility of the Cause.

The elucidations of the Universal House of Justice stem from its legislative function, and as such differ from interpretation. The divinely inspired legislation of the House of Justice does not attempt to say what the revealed Word means—it states what must be done in cases where the revealed Text or its authoritative interpretation is not explicit. It is, therefore, on quite a different level from the sacred Text, and the Universal House of Justice is empowered to abrogate or amend its own legislation whenever it judges the conditions make this desirable.

As to your question concerning whether the translations, compilations and other works prepared by the Research Department at the Bahá’í World Centre should be considered as partaking in the infallibility of the Universal House of Justice and, therefore, constituting the “final word,” the House of Justice indicates that such materials, though prepared at its direction, represent the views of that Department. While such views are very useful as an aid to resolving perplexities or gaining an enhanced understanding of the Bahá’í teachings, they should never be taken to be in the same category as the elucidations and clarifications provided by the Universal House of Justice in the exercise of its assigned functions. However, the House of Justice chooses to convey the materials prepared by the Research Department to the friends because it wishes them to be thoughtfully attended to and seriously considered.

We are asked to assure you of the prayers of the Universal House of Justice that your services to the Cause will be confirmed.

With loving Bahá’í greetings,



Comments

September 21. On this date in 1957, a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States referred to Bahá'ís as "the leaven of God" and "the chosen people of God."

submitted 17 days ago by A35821363

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[454. Bahá'ís Are the Leaven of God, the Chosen People of God](#)

"...The Bahá'ís are the leaven of God, which must leaven the lump of their nation. In direct ratio to their success will be the protection vouchsafed, not only to them but to their country. These are the immutable laws of God, from which there is no escape: 'For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.'

"They cannot be the chosen people of God,--the ones who have received the bounty of accepting Him in His Day, the recipients of the Master's Divine Plan--and do nothing about it. The obligation to teach is the obligation of every Bahá'í, and particularly, the obligations of the American Bahá'ís towards humanity are great and inescapable. To the degree to which they discharge them will they be blessed and protected, happy and satisfied."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Guardian to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, September 21, 1957: Bahá'í News, November 1957)



Comments

September 21. On this date in 1957, a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi wrote "that a course on Covenant-breaking should be included in the Summer School curriculum, so that the friends may understand the nature of this evil, and how it has affected our Faith for one hundred years ..."

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September 21. On this date in 1957, [a letter written](#) on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States stated "that a course on Covenant-breaking should be included in the Summer School curriculum, so that the friends may understand the nature of this evil, and how it has affected our Faith for one hundred years, and other Faiths in the past. The American Bahá'ís, aside from the older ones, do not seem to have any concept whatsoever of what a Covenant-breaker is, and the place to educate them in these matters is in the Summer Schools and on other occasions when they meet in large numbers."

[625. Course on Covenant-Breaking Should Be Included in Summer School Curriculum](#)

"...and your Assembly cannot be too careful or vigilant in watching over the Community seeking out the sources of corruption and protecting the friends. He feels that a course on Covenant-breaking should be included in the Summer School curriculum, so that the friends may understand the nature of this evil, and how it has affected our Faith for one hundred years, and other Faiths in the past. The American Bahá'ís, aside from the older ones, do not seem to have any concept whatsoever of what a Covenant-breaker is, and the place to educate them in these matters is in the Summer Schools and on other occasions when they meet in large numbers."

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Comments

September 21. On this date in 1957, Shoghi Effendi wrote his last letter to the Americas, titled "Heights Never Before Attained," later published in "Citadel of Faith" (pages 151-158).

submitted 17 days ago by A35821363

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September 21, 1957

Heights Never Before Attained

The American Bahá'í Community has, ever since the launching of the global [Spiritual Crusade](#), in which it has been assigned the lion's share in view of the primacy conferred upon it by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, exerted itself, in numerous and widely scattered areas of the globe, with commendable perseverance, a high sense of undeviating loyalty and exemplary consecration. The inexorable march of events, hastening its members along the path of their destiny, is steadily carrying them to the stage at which the momentous [Plan](#), to which they have dedicated their resources, will have reached its midway point.

Enduring Achievements

A prodigious expenditure of effort, a stupendous flow of material resources, an unprecedented dispersal of pioneers, embracing so vast a section of the globe, and bringing in their wake the rise, the multiplication and consolidation of so many institutions, so divers in character, so potent and full of promise, already stand to their credit, and augur well for a befitting consummation of a decade-long task in the years immediately ahead.

The opening of a large percentage of the virgin territories, scattered over the face of the planet, and assigned, under the provisions of the [Ten-Year Plan](#), to this community and its

sister and daughter communities in all continents of the globe; the allocation of vast sums, for the founding of national [Hazíratu'l-Quds](#), for the establishment of national Bahá'í endowments; and for the purchase of the sites of future [Bahá'í Temples](#); the financial aid extended and the moral support accorded to a still persecuted sister community, struggling heroically for its emancipation, in the cradle of the Faith; the steady progress in the vital process of incorporating firmly grounded local spiritual assemblies in various states of the union; the translation of Bahá'í literature into the languages listed in the [Ten-Year Plan](#), as well as into a number of supplementary languages, spontaneously undertaken by American Bahá'í [pioneers](#) in territories far beyond the confines of their homeland; the completion of the landscaping of the area immediately surrounding the [Mother Temple of the West](#), in conformity with the expressed, often repeated wishes of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, contributing so greatly to the beauty of an edifice, the spiritual influence of which He, repeatedly and unequivocally, emphasized; the acquisition of the site of the first dependency of that same edifice, designed to pave the way for the early establishment of the first of several institutions, which, as conceived by Him, will be grouped around every [Bahá'í House of Worship](#), complementing, through their association with direct service to mankind, in the educational, the humanitarian and social fields, its spiritual function as the ordained place of communion with the Creator and the Spirit of His appointed Messenger in this day; the establishment of the Bahá'í Publishing Trust; the generous financial assistance extended, the administrative guidance vouchsafed and the unfailing encouragement given, by the elected representatives of this same community to the newly fledged assemblies, emerging into independent existence in both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres; the substantial share which one of its members has had in the acquisition of one of the holy sites in the capital city of Bahá'u'lláh's native land; the preponderating role played by the various agencies, acting under the direction of its national elected representatives, in giving publicity to the Faith, through the proclamation of the fundamental verities underlying the Bahá'í Revelation, the airing of the manifold grievances weighing so heavily on the overwhelming majority of their coreligionists, and the appeals directed, on their behalf, to men of eminence in various walks of life, as well as to different departments of the United Nations, both in New York and Geneva; and, finally, ranking as equally meritorious to anything hitherto achieved by the members of this privileged community, the magnificent and imperishable contribution made by them, singly and collectively, to the rise and establishment of the institutions of their beloved Faith at its World Center; through the assistance given by their distinguished representatives serving in the Holy Land, in hastening the erection of the [Bahá'í International Archives](#), through the purchase of the site of the [Mother Temple of the Holy Land](#), the enlargement of the scope of Bahá'í international endowments on the slopes of Mt. Carmel and in the Plain of 'Akká, the em-

bellishment of the sacred precincts of the two holiest Shrines of the Bahá'í world; the formation of the Israel Branches of four national spiritual assemblies, the preparation and completion of the designs of the first [Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs](#) to be erected in the Asiatic, the African and Australian continents, and the setting in motion, through the instrumentality of various departments of the Israeli government, of a long-drawn-out process, culminating in the **expropriation by the state of the entire property, owned and controlled by the remnants of the breakers of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant, immediately surrounding His resting-place and the [Mansion of Bahjí](#), the evacuation of this property by this ignoble band, and the final and definite purification, after the lapse of no less than six decades, of the Outer Sanctuary of the [Most Holy Shrine of the Bahá'í world](#), of the defilement, which had caused so much sorrow and anxiety to the heart of 'Abdu'l-Bahá**—these are among the enduring achievements which four brief years of unremitting devotion to the interests of the [Ten-Year Plan](#) have brought about, and which will eternally redound to the glory of the champion-builders of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic [World Order](#), holding aloft so valiantly the banner of His Faith in the great republic of the West.

The Home Front—Base for Expansion of Future Operations

Though much has been achieved in the space of less than five years, though the objectives of the [Ten-Year Plan](#), in most of its essential aspects, may be said to have been triumphantly attained long before the time appointed for its termination, through a striking display, and a remarkable combination, of American Bahá'í initiative, resourcefulness, generosity, fidelity and perseverance, the [Plan, prosecuted hitherto so vigorously by the rank and file of this community, may be said to be still suffering in some of its vital aspects, from certain deficiencies, which, if not speedily and fundamentally remedied, will not only mutilate the [Plan](#) itself, but jeopardize the prizes won so laboriously since its inauguration.

As I have already forewarned the energetic prosecutors of the global [Crusade](#) in the North American continent, the home front, from which have sprung, since the inception of the [Formative Age](#) of the Faith, the dynamic forces which have set in motion, and directed the operation, of so many processes, in both the teaching and administrative spheres of Bahá'í activity, and which must continue to act as a base for the steady expansion of future operations in every continent of the globe, and the extension of their ramifications to the uttermost corners of the earth, and which must be increasingly regarded, as the forces of internal disruption and the stress and danger of aggressiveness from without gather momentum, as the sole stronghold of a Faith which cannot hope to escape unscathed

from the turmoil gathering around it—such a home front must, at all costs, and in the shortest possible time, be spiritually reinvigorated, administratively expanded, and materially replenished. The flame of devotion ignited and the enthusiasm generated, during the celebrations which commemorated the centenary of the birth of the Mission of the Divine Author of our Faith, and which, in the course of the years immediately following it have carried the members of the American Bahá'í Community, so far and so high, along the road leading to their ultimate destiny, must, in whatever way possible, be fanned and continually fed throughout the entire area of the Union, in every state from the Atlantic to the Pacific seaboard, in every locality where Bahá'ís reside, in every heart throbbing with the love of Bahá'u'lláh. The spirit that sent forth, not so long ago, in such rapid succession, so many pioneers to such remote areas of the globe, must at all costs and above everything else, be recaptured, for the twofold purpose of swelling the number, and of ensuring the continual flow, of pioneers, so essential for the safeguarding of the prizes won in the course of the several campaigns of a [world-girdling Crusade](#), and of combatting the evil forces which a relentless and all-pervasive materialism, the cancerous growth of militant racialism, political corruption, unbridled capitalism, wide-spread lawlessness and gross immorality, are, alas, unleashing, with ominous swiftness, amongst various classes of the society to which the members of this community belong.

The administrative strongholds of a Faith, bound to be subjected on the one hand, to a severe spiritual challenge from within, through the inevitable impact of these devastating influences on its infant strength, and, on the other, to the onslaught of ecclesiastical leaders, the traditional defenders of religious orthodoxy from without, must be multiplied and reinforced for the purpose of warding off the inevitable attacks of the assailants, of vindicating the ideals and principles which animate their defenders, and of ensuring the ultimate victory and ascendancy of the Faith itself over the nefarious elements seeking to undermine it from within, and its powerful detractors aiming at its extinction from without.

Nor must the material resources, so vitally required to meet the challenge of a continually expanding Faith, be, for a moment, either ignored, neglected, or underestimated—resources which a home front, materially and adequately replenished by a steady and marked influx of active and wholehearted supporters from all ranks of society, can, in the long run, provide. As the imperative needs of a Faith, now irresistibly advancing in every direction, multiply, a corresponding increase in the financial means at the disposal of its national administrators directing and controlling its operations, within and beyond the confines of their homeland, to meet these essential and urgent requirements, must be ensured, if its onward march is not to be either halted or slowed down.

Mighty and Historic Enterprises

It is upon the individual believer, constituting the fundamental unit in the structure of the home front, that the revitalization, the expansion, and the enrichment of the home front must ultimately depend. The more strenuous the effort exerted, daily and methodically, by the individual laboring on the home front to rise to loftier heights of consecration, of self-abnegation, to contribute, through pioneering at home, to the multiplication of Bahá'í isolated centers, groups and assemblies, and to raise, through diligent, painstaking and continual endeavor to convert receptive souls to the Faith he has espoused, the number of its active and wholehearted supporters, the sooner will the vast and multiple enterprises, launched beyond the confines of the homeland, and now so desperately calling for a greater supply of men and means, be provided with the necessary support that will ensure their uninterrupted development and hasten their ultimate fruition, and the lighter will be the burden of the impending contest that must be waged, sooner or later, within the borders of the Union itself, between the rising institutions of [Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic divinely appointed Order](#), and the exponents of obsolescent doctrines and the defenders, both secular and religious, of a corrupt and fast-declining society.

The fourth phase of the Ten-Year Plan, which the prosecutors of a [world-encompassing Crusade](#) are about to enter, must witness on the one hand, on every home front, and particularly within the confines of the American homeland, this same spiritual reinvigoration, administrative expansion, and material replenishment, constituting the triple facets of a task which can brook no further delay, and, on the other, an acceleration, particularly in connection with the construction of the [Mother Temples](#) of Australia and Germany (the needs of the [Mother Temple](#) of Africa having, to all intents and purposes, been met) in the contributions to be made, by individual believers as well as national spiritual assemblies, to ensure the uninterrupted progress and the early completion of these mighty and historic enterprises.

As the members of the valiant American Bahá'í Community have, in the space of more than four years, blazed the trail, and vindicated their primacy, through the share they have had in opening the chief remaining virgin territories of the globe, in contributing to the furtherance of the interests of the institutions of the Faith at its World Center, and in hastening the acquisition of national [Hazíratu'l-Quds](#), the establishment of Bahá'í national endowments, and the purchase of sites for future [Bahá'í Temples](#), so must they, if they be intent on safeguarding that primacy, and on preserving, intact and untarnished, the noble example they have already set the Bahá'í world, maintain their enviable position, as the vanguard of [the army of Bahá'u'lláh's crusaders](#), in rescuing, while there is yet time, their

home front from the precarious position in which it now finds itself, and in displaying for the purpose of ensuring the erection of the [Mother Temples](#) of three continents—tasks which tower far above any of the national enterprises hitherto undertaken—be they [Hazíratu'l-Quds](#), endowments or [Temple sites](#)—that selfsame generosity and self-abnegation which have distinguished their stewardship to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh in the past.

The year, the opening of which will mark the midway point of this [World Spiritual Crusade](#), must be distinguished from all previous years, by the special allotment of a substantial sum from the national budget that will adequately meet the urgent needs of these [Houses of Worship](#), and particularly those that are to be erected in the European and Australian continents.

A Golden Opportunity, a Glorious Challenge

The forthcoming convocation of no less than five intercontinental conferences, marking the passing of half of the time allotted for the prosecution of a [World Crusade](#), and to be held, in five continents of the globe, for the purpose of paying homage to the Author of the Bahá'í Revelation for His protection, guidance and blessings, of focusing attention on the achievements of the immediate past and the pressing requirements of the immediate future, will, it is my ardent hope and prayer, provide a fresh stimulus for the adequate discharge of these two afore-mentioned responsibilities, which constitute the distinguishing features of the fourth phase of a rapidly unfolding [Plan](#).

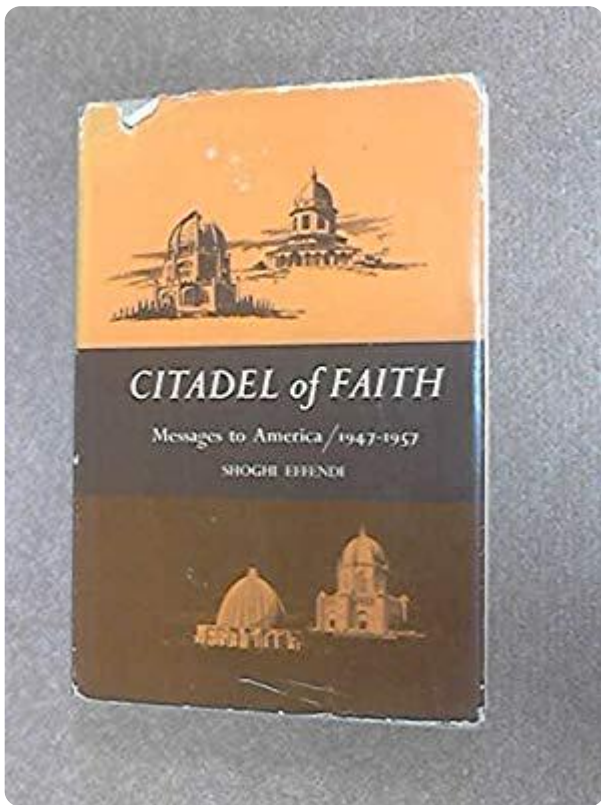
At four of these five conferences, in the proceedings of which four, the members of the American Bahá'í Community—the principal executors of '[Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan](#) and the keepers and defenders of the stronghold of the [Bahá'í Administrative Order](#)—will participate, through their official representatives, the voice of the champion-builders of [Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Order](#), who can well claim to have had a decisive share in the great strides made by this [Crusade](#), should be raised in a spirit and manner that will galvanize these conferences into action, and produce such results as will reverberate round the world.

A golden opportunity, a glorious challenge, an inescapable duty, a staggering responsibility, confront them, at this fresh turning point in the fortunes of a [Crusade](#), for which they have so unremittingly labored, whose Cause they have so notably advanced, in the further unfoldment of which they must continue to play a leading part, and in whose closing stages, they will, I feel confident, rise to heights never before attained in the course of six decades of American Bahá'í history.

Once again—and this time more fervently than ever before—I direct my plea to every single member of this strenuously laboring, clear-visioned, stout-hearted, spiritually endowed community, every man and woman, on whose individual efforts, resolution, self-sacrifice and perseverance the immediate destinies of the Faith of God, now traversing so crucial a stage in its rise and establishment, primarily depends, not to allow, through apathy, timidity or complacency, this one remaining opportunity to be irretrievably lost. I would rather entreat each and every one of them to immortalize this approaching, fateful hour in the evolution of a [World Spiritual Crusade](#), by a fresh consecration to their God-given mission, coupled with an instantaneous plan of action, at once so dynamic and decisive, as to wipe out, on the one hand, with one stroke, the deficiencies which have, to no small extent, bogged down the operations of the [Crusade](#), on the home front, and tremendously accelerate, on the other, the progress of the triple task, launched, in three continents, and constituting one of its preeminent objectives.

His Watchful Power and Unfailing Grace

May He, Who through the irresistible operation of the will of His almighty Father, called this community into being, nursed it in its infancy through the inestimable benefits conferred by a divinely appointed Covenant, infused through His personal contact with its members, and the proclamation of His Own Station, a new spirit into their souls; conferred, subsequently, through the revelation of His Tablets, the spiritual primacy designed to enable them to assume a preponderating role in the propagation of His Father's Faith; graciously aided them, following His ascension, to inaugurate their God-given mission by fixing the pattern, creating the institutions, and vindicating the purpose, of a [divinely appointed Administrative Order](#) and by launching subsequently the preliminary undertakings in their homeland, as well as in all the republics of Latin America, in anticipation of the formal inauguration of a systematic [World Crusade](#), for the furtherance of His Father's Cause; and more recently assisted them to embark, in concert with their brethren in other continents of the globe, upon the first stage of their world-encompassing mission, and to win a series of victories unprecedented in the annals of the Faith in their homeland—may He, through His watchful care and unfailing grace, continue to sustain them, individually and collectively, in the course of the remaining stages of the [Plan](#), and enable them to bring to a triumphant termination the initial epoch in the unfoldment of the [Divine Plan](#) which He has primarily entrusted to them and on the successful prosecution of which their entire spiritual destiny must depend.



Comments

September 21. On this date in 1957, Shoghi Effendi wrote "that the National Assembly should consider itself, aside from its other duties, as a Committee of Vigilance to watch over the Faith and protect it from its internal enemies, and from the constantly carried on and insidious activities...."

submitted 17 days ago by A35821363

September 21. On this date in 1957, [a letter written](#) on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States stated that "that the National Assembly should consider itself, aside from its other duties, as a **Committee of Vigilance** to watch over the Faith and protect it from its **internal enemies**, and from the constantly carried on and insidious activities...."

[619. National Assembly Should Consider Itself as Committee of Vigilance](#)

"He feels that your Assembly should redouble its vigilance, in fact he feels that the National Assembly should consider itself, aside from its other duties, as a Committee of Vigilance to watch over the Faith and protect it from its internal enemies, and from the constantly carried on and insidious activities...."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Guardian to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, September 21, 1957)



Comments

September 21. On this date in 1998, Susan Stiles Maneck wrote the Universal House of Justice, asking about the relationship between "materialistic methodologies" and "doctrinal heresy" in academic fields.

submitted 17 days ago by A35821363

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Academic Methodologies by / on behalf of Universal House of Justice and Susan Maneck 1997-09-21 1. Letter from Maneck to the Universal House of Justice Dear Universal House of Justice, Thank you for taking the time to respond at length to my letter in the message dated 20 July 1997 [below]. I have given this letter much thought, but remain confused by several portions of it and would greatly appreciate your clarification.

If I understand you correctly you are suggesting that Western academic methodology is typified by a "purely materialistic interpretation of reality" which "ignores the issues of God's continuous relationship with His creation." I am not entirely sure what is meant by this. It is true that Western scientific and historical methodology admits its inability to determine the truth or falsity of spiritual claims and cannot presume their existence as they conduct their study. But I would think that such a method would become materialistic only if the scholar or scientist insists that because their scholarly apparatus cannot equip them to detect divine intervention or involvement, that such intervention does not therefore exist. The historical-critical method is rather like the proverbial the spider's web. It is very good at capturing the "flies" of historical circumstance and context, but utterly useless in snaring the "phoenix" of revelation. If the tendency of some to deny the existence of the "phoenix" because their inability to "snare" it, is what is intended by "materialistic interpretations" I would certainly agree. Sound academic methodology does not call for such a conclusion and those who assume it are overstepping the proper bounds of their field. It

has been my observation that materialism arises in scholarship, like all science, when it attempts to "take over" the sphere belonging properly to revelation, whereas religion becomes superstition when it attempts to assert its authority over scientific matters. Just as in the case of the equality of men and women we regard complementarity not sameness as the proper relationship, so such complementarity ought to exist between science and religion. When conflation occurs we end up with monstrosities like Scientific Creationism and Scientology.

However, your connection of "materialistic methodologies" with Covenantal issues make me wonder if there is not something else at stake. Any academic enterprise dealing with texts requires that the scholar get as close to the original source, those closest in time to the events they describe, as possible; and attempt to read these within the context in which they were written. This can create a certain amount of tensions with the common understanding of the Covenant which tends to give precedence to authority and later interpretations. I remember this issue came up for me in the course of a conversation I had with Mr. ... years ago when I received an award from the Association of Bahá'í Mr. ... was emphatic that I should never write anything which might contradict things in any way either the Dawnbreakers or God Passes By. I did not feel I could in good conscience give him the assurance he asked me for because it was my understanding that historical matters needed to rest upon evidence rather than authority. Is this insistence on relying upon original sources and giving precedence to evidence over authority what the House of Justice has in mind when it refers to "materialistic methodologies?"

I am well aware that the House of Justice has, on numerous occasions, condemned materialistic methodologies in connection with scholarship. Confusion on this issue has created a great deal of estrangement among many Bahá'í academics in relationship to the Bahá'í community at large. Often times the community tends to regard any discovery made by academicians as "materialistic" if it conflicts with commonly received beliefs. Academicians, for their part, see many of the so-called "integrative" methods supported by some Bahá'ís as a reformulation of the scholasticism of the Middle Ages, which was guided by the principle that authority must override the evidence and guide its interpretation. They are resistant to it for they see this method as having impeding the progress of science. I think it would be of great help if the House of Justice would clarify this matter by providing some precise models of what kind of scholarship they deem "materialistic."

I note the statement towards the end of your letter to the effect that "Bahá'ís who are trained in various academic disciplines do not constitute a discrete body within the community" and that there is "no group of academics who can claim to speak on behalf of

Bahá'í scholars in generally. I hope that the House understands that any references I have made to "academics" or to "administrators" within the Faith referred solely to function and not to any class or body. By academics here I meant solely those who have taken the Bahá'í Faith as their object of study and not simply those who apply Bahá'í principles to their scholarship in whatever field.

The House of Justice urged me "to reflect deeply on the reasons why those pursuing this agenda seek by every means possible to represent their actions as a disinterested search for knowledge and themselves as victims of authoritarianism." Please, allow me to make some observations based upon what I know from my long years of association with many of these individuals, friendships which have extended to the greater part of my adult life. First, it must be recognized that however distorted the picture which these people have presented, it does genuinely reflect what they, themselves believe to be true. At the same time, one must acknowledge that those perceptions have been so out of keeping with the evidence of what actually happened as to verge on paranoid delusion... The question which remains is how this distrustful attitude towards authority came to prevail over so many of the Bahá'í academics. Over a number of years scholars experienced growing frustration with their difficulty in gaining access to primary sources. Furthermore when one seemingly legitimate academic endeavor after another come to naught because of the disapproval of the Institutions, they began to suspect that the Institutions were endeavoring to withhold the truth from the body of believers. Thus, a significant portion of the Bahá'í academic community, myself included, came to harbor grave doubts regarding the integrity of the Institutions. Furthermore, many of them came to believe that the only way in which truth could be adequately safeguarded was to foster a kind of "civil society" within the Bahá'í community which would allow for unfettered discourse. Increasingly they began to make common cause with non-academics within the Bahá'í community who were calling for extensive administrative reforms. Then, when internet access allowed for the kind of free-wheeling discourse they supported, long-festering doubts rapidly became malignant in character and what had hitherto been misgivings and suspicions came to be perceived as fact. The paranoid mind set which prevailed so clouded the judgement of some of the academics that they began to make wild accusations which betrayed all the methods of sound scholarship and the rules of evidence which they had fought so hard to defend.

The quote which you provided me on the subject of hikmat may well hold the key to the very different perceptions of the reality of this situation. Although references to "wisdom" appear numerous times in the Writings, Bahá'ís in the Western world are almost entirely ignorant of what it signifies. Furthermore, the concept itself is utterly foreign to the ethical

standards which prevail in the West, and for Westerners it is difficult to perceive of the exercise of hikmat as anything other than sheer hypocrisy and deception. While Bahá'í academics trained in Persian and Arabic are more familiar with this term and its usage, they especially cannot find ways of reconciling it with the standards of truth promoted both in their profession and the Writings as well. My own article "Wisdom and Dissimulation", published recently in Bahá'í Studies Review, represented my own feeble attempt to come to terms with this issue. To my knowledge it is the only thing written in English on this topic and I do not think I was able to reach any satisfying resolution to the dilemmas posed by the demands for both truth and wisdom as found in the Writings. It is my perception that this inability to balance truth and wisdom represents a much more fundamental issue facing Bahá'í scholars than either issues of methodology or the question of individual rights versus responsibilities (although the latter is certainly related.) Guidance from the Institutions which would assist Western Bahá'ís and professional academics in particular regarding the manner in which they might exercise wisdom without compromising standards of honesty, integrity, and truthfulness which they hold so dear might help remediate this problem. It may be as well, that Bahá'í academics all too often have not recognized that to a great extent failure to exercise wisdom represents a failure of love.

I appreciate the assurance of your prayers at the Sacred Shrine.

With loving Bahá'í greetings, Susan Stiles Maneck 2. Second letter from Maneck to the Universal House of Justice To: Bahai World Centre Subject: Addendum to Sept. 21 letter Date: Mon, 17 Nov 1997 Dear Universal House of Justice,

I am writing this letter as an addendum to the letter I sent you dated September 21, 1997. There was a question I still had in regards to your message to me dated 20 July 1997 which I did not ask because at the time I could not decide how best to articulate it in a befitting manner. You will recall that I had suggested that many of the difficulties had arisen because many Bahá'í historians and Middle East specialists had exceeded the proper bounds of their calling as scholars by interfering in administrative affairs with their constant criticisms of the institutions. You responded by stating that there were far greater problems involved, referring to "the behavior of a very small group of Bahá'ís who . . . aggressively sought to promote their misconceptions of the Teachings among their fellow believers." You further refer to attempts "to alter the essential nature of Bahá'u'lláh's message."

While I recognize that in some cases certain Bahá'ís have done precisely that, these statements were troubling to me inasmuch as they raised questions in regards to the limits

of tolerance within the Bahá'í Faith. Specifically, as you are no doubt aware, Dr. ... has been vigorously insisting that the investigation which was launched by the International Teaching Center against himself and others was motivated by a desire to impose a rigid doctrinal conformity on Bahá'í scholars which would be inconsistent with our ability to function as academics. I had argued, to the contrary, that the investigation was largely launched in reaction to what was seen as an attack on the Institutions themselves. For this reason your letter of 20 July created much confusion for me because it seemed to vindicate Dr. ...'s perception of these events.

My question is, to what extent does the House see these problems as issues of doctrinal heresy which must therefore be suppressed and to what extent are the Institutions empowered to do this? I am aware, for instance, of the verse in the Will and Testament which reads: "To none is given the right to put forth his own opinion or express his particular conviction. All must seek guidance and turn unto the Centre of the Cause and the House of Justice." I note, however that the term for opinion here is *rai* which is one of the principles (*usul*) of Islamic jurisprudence. Given the juridical language of this entire section of the Will and Testament I would assume that `Abdu'l-Bahá was speaking here largely of opinions in regard to matters of Bahá'í law and practice rather than doctrine.

If the Universal House of Justice does regard the imposition of orthodoxy on the Bahá'í community as within the purview of the authority of the Institutions I wonder if you could explain to me how this fits in with the tolerance which Abdu'l-Bahá calls for elsewhere within the Writings. I am thinking for instance of the passage in *Kitab-i Bada'i al-Athar* 1:294 where Abdu'l-Bahá insists that there must be no interference in beliefs or conscience. I also note that in another Tablet `Abdu'l-Bahá states that so long as courtesy is maintained that in the Faith no one can rule over a persons conscience. He goes on to say that such freedom does not extend to matters of divine law. (*Ma'idih-yi Asmani* 5:17-18.) I also have in mind Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet to Bourjerdi where even over the vital issue of the station of the Manifestation, Bahá'u'lláh refuses to allow the imposition of rigid dogma.

Thank you for your careful consideration of the issues I raise and for your continued prayers at the Sacred Shrines.

Obediently yours, Susan Maneck 3. Letter from the Universal House of Justice to Maneck 8 February 1998

Transmitted by email

Dr. Susan Stiles Maneck U.S.A.

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The Universal House of Justice received your emails of 21 September

Your email of 21 September covers a number of issues, the first of

The training of some scholars in fields such as religion and history

Some of the protagonists in the discussions on the Internet have in

The House of Justice recognizes that, at the other extreme, there are

Dr. Susan Stiles Maneck U.S.A. 8 February 1998 Page 2 inconsistent applications of the Sacred Text, and provides fuel to those who would mistakenly characterize loyalty to the Covenant as "fundamentalism".

It is not surprising that individual Bahá'ís hold and express different

Beyond contention, moreover, is the condition in which a person is

The Universal House of Justice does not see itself obliged to prescribe

O Son of Beauty! By My spirit and by My favor! By My mercy and by My

Although, in conveying His Revelation, the Manifestation uses the language and culture of the country into which He is born, He is not confined to using terminology with the same connotations as those given to it by His predecessors or contemporaries; He delivers His message in a form which His audience, both immediate and in centuries to come, is capable of grasping. It is for Bahá'í scholars to elaborate, over a period of time, methodologies which will enable them to perform their work with this understanding. This is a challenging task, but not one which should be beyond the scope of Bahá'ís who are learned in the Teachings as well as competent in their scientific disciplines. This brings us to the specific points raised in your email of 17 November 1997. As you well understand, not only the right but also the responsibility

Dr. Susan Stiles Maneck U.S.A. 8 February 1998 Page 3 of each believer to explore truth for himself or herself are fundamental to the Bahá'í teachings. This principle is an integral feature of the coming of age of humankind, inseparable from the social transformation to

which Bahá'u'lláh is calling the peoples of the world. It is as relevant to specifically scholarly activity as it is to the rest of spiritual and intellectual life. Every human being is ultimately responsible to God for the use which he or she makes of these possibilities; conscience is never to be coerced, whether by other individuals or institutions.

Conscience, however, is not an unchangeable absolute. One dictionary

The functioning of one's conscience, then, depends upon one's under

A Bahá'í recognizes that one aspect of his spiritual and intellectu

In the discussion of wisdom in your email of 21 September 1997, you

A Bahá'í's duty to pursue an unfettered search after truth should l
Dr. Susan Stiles Maneck U.S.A. 8 February 1998 Page 4 that adherence to the Covenant, to which he is a party, is not blind imitation but conscious choice, freely made and freely followed.

In many of His utterances, `Abdu'l-Bahá extols governments which up

There are three types of freedom. The first is divine freedom, whic
The second is the political freedom of Europeans, which leaves the

The third freedom is that which is born of obedience to the laws an

Education of the individual Bahá'í in the Divine law is one of the
The deepening and enrichment of the spiritual life of the individua
Dr. Susan Stiles Maneck U.S.A. 8 February 1998 Page 5 underlying this Faith, his training in its administrative processes, his understanding of the fundamentals of the Covenants established by its Author and the authorized Interpreter of its teachings, should be made the supreme objectives of the national representatives responsible for the edification, the progress and consolidation of these communities. Such is the duty resting on the elected institutions of the Faith for the promotion of the spiritual, moral and ethical lives of the individual believers. Parallel with this, the Bahá'í Faith upholds the freedom of conscience which permits a person to follow his chosen religion: no one may be compelled to become a Bahá'í, or to remain a Bahá'í if he conscientiously wishes to leave the Faith. As to the thoughts of the Bahá'ís themselves -- that is those who have chosen to follow the religion

of Bahá'u'lláh -- the institutions do not busy themselves with what individual believers think unless those thoughts become expressed in actions which are inimical to the basic principles and vital interests of the Faith. With regard to the accusation that to make such distinctions borders on restriction of the freedom of speech, one should accept that civil society has long recognized that utterance can metamorphose into behaviour, and has taken steps to protect itself and its citizens against such behaviour when it becomes socially destructive. Laws against sedition and hate-mongering are examples that come readily to mind.

It will surely be clear to you from the above comments that the cat

It is important for all those Bahá'ís who are engaged in the academe

The problem which aroused the concern of the House of Justice, and Dr. Susan Stiles Maneck U.S.A. 8 February 1998 Page 6 behaviour has been abundantly confirmed by statements made and actions taken by certain of the involved individuals since they withdrew from the Bahá'í community. They sought to use the language, the occasions and the credibility of scholarly activity to lend a counterfeit authority to a private enterprise which was essentially ideological in nature and self-motivated in origin. Even if their original aims were idealistic in nature -- no matter how ill-informed and erroneous in concept -- they had evolved in practice into an assault on the Covenant which Bahá'u'lláh has created as a stronghold within which His Cause would evolve as He intends. The purpose of some of those responsible would seem to be that, by diminishing the station of Bahá'u'lláh -- a disservice done to previous Manifestations by people similarly inclined --, by casting doubt on the authority conferred on 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Guardian and the Universal House of Justice, and by calling into question the integrity of Bahá'í administrative processes, they would be able to persuade a number of unwary followers that the Bahá'í Faith is in fact not a Divine Revelation but a kind of socio-political system being manipulated by ambitious individuals.

Your own familiarity with these same persons' behaviour will have p

For every thing, however, God has created a sign and symbol, and es
We trust that these comments will help you to see the implications
With loving Bahá'í greetings, Department of the Secretariat



Comments

September 22, 1937. Shoghi wrote "The age-long sufferings and tribulations which the Jews all over the world have so cruelly experienced will be terminated during the Bahá'í era, as they will be gradually led to embrace the Faith which, indeed, constitutes the only means of salvation to their race.

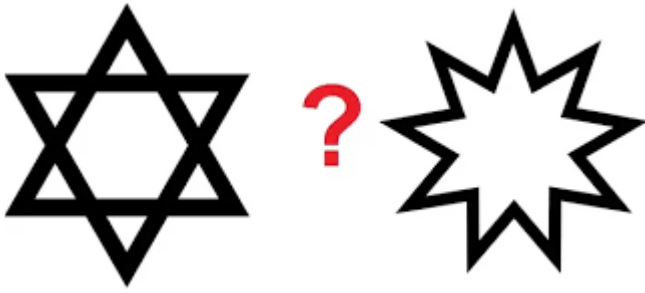
submitted 17 days ago by A35821363

September 22. On this date in 1937, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#), "...You should certainly endeavour to establish further contacts with your Jewish fellow-citizens, as their spiritual destiny is assuredly bright. **The age-long sufferings and tribulations which the Jews all over the world have so cruelly experienced will be terminated during the [Bahá'í era](#), as they will be gradually led to embrace the Faith which, indeed, constitutes the only means of salvation to their race.**"

[1817. The Sufferings and Tribulations of the Jews Will Terminate During the Bahá'í Era](#)

"...You should certainly endeavour to establish further contacts with your Jewish fellow-citizens, as their spiritual destiny is assuredly bright. The age-long sufferings and tribulations which the Jews all over the world have so cruelly experienced will be terminated during the [Bahá'í era](#), as they will be gradually led to embrace the Faith which, indeed, constitutes the only means of salvation to their race."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, September 22, 1937)



Comments

[–]InfiniteHornet58530 points1 point2 points16 days ago(0 children)

I find this letter incredibly disturbing for multiple reasons. I can elaborate upon request. -a Reform Jew in the US, ~30 years old

September 22. On this date in 1898, The first Western pilgrims left America for Palestine. Led by Ibrahim George Kheiralla, the group included Phoebe Hearst, Lua Getsinger, May Maxwell, and Robert Turner. In 'Akká, they witnessed first hand the conflict between `Abdu'l-Bahá and his brothers.

submitted17 days agobyA35821363

The first Western Bahá'í pilgrims, pictured in the winter of 1898. [Ibrahim George Kheiralla](#) is seated in the middle of the front row. [Lua Getsinger](#) sits second from right. Standing in the left is [Robert Turner](#).

September 22. On this date in 1898, The first Western pilgrims left America for Palestine. Led by [Ibrahim George Kheiralla](#), the group included [Phoebe Hearst](#), [Lua Getsinger](#), [May Maxwell](#), and [Robert Turner](#). In 'Akká, they witnessed first hand the conflict between `Abdu'l-Bahá and his brothers.

On November 11, 1849, [Ibrahim George Kheiralla](#) was born to a Christian family in a village on Mount Lebanon. He later studied medicine at the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut.

[Ibrahim George Kheiralla](#) converted to the Bahá'í Faith while living in Egypt in 1889 when he met Hájí `Abdu'l-Karím-i-Tihrání. Kheiralla went through Europe and eventually came to the United States in late 1892 where he joined Anton Haddad, the first Bahá'í to come to America. Initially, Kheiralla settled in New York where he began teaching "Truth Seeker" classes. He visited [Charles Augustus Briggs](#) and others, as well as the Syrian community in New York.

In 1894 Kheiralla moved on to Chicago following the interest fostered by the World's Columbian Exposition's World Parliament of Religions. In Chicago he taught "Truth Seeker" classes. One of the early converts while Kheiralla was in Chicago was [Thornton Chase](#), who had read the presentation about the Bahá'ís at the Exposition, and is generally considered the first Bahá'í convert in the West to have remained in the religion. Other individuals had converted, but none remained members of the religion.

Another to join the religion from Kheiralla's early classes was [Howard MacNutt](#), who would later compile *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, a prominent collection of the addresses of 'Abdu'l-Bahá during his journeys in America. Both men were designated as "Disciples of 'Abdu'l-Bahá" and "Heralds of the Covenant" by Shoghi Effendi.

Another student of the classes and Disciple was [Lua Getsinger](#), designated as the "mother teacher of the West".

Another who "passed" the class and joined the religion was the maverick [Honoré Jackson](#). Kheiralla moved once again, to Kenosha, Wisconsin, in 1895, where a large Bahá'í community soon developed.

Because of his success promulgating the Bahá'í Faith in North America, 'Abdu'l-Bahá titled Kheiralla "Bahá's Peter," "the Second Columbus" and "Conqueror of America." 'Abdu'l-Bahá would write a Tablet to Ibráhím George Kheiralla.

In 1898, Kheiralla undertook a Bahá'í pilgrimage to Palestine to meet 'Abdu'l-Bahá with other American pilgrims, including Phoebe Hearst, Lua Getsinger and May Boles. In Akka, Kheiralla witnessed first hand the conflict between 'Abdu'l-Bahá and his brothers. Upon his return to America in 1899, Kheiralla began to announce his avowed leadership of Western Bahá'ís independent of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and authored a book, *Beha'u'llah*, wherein he states his belief that 'Abdu'l-Bahá was equal in rank to his brothers [Mírzá Muhammad 'Alí](#), Díyá'u'lláh, and Badi'u'lláh. Early after the return to America, 'Abdu'l-Bahá sent, first, Anton Haddad with a letter contesting the definition of leadership, then Kheiralla's initial teacher of the religion, 'Abdu'l-Karím-i-Tíhrání, to confront him.

The conflict made the newspapers. Ultimately, in the conflict between 'Abdu'l-Bahá and [Mírzá Muhammad 'Alí](#), Kheiralla sided with the latter for which he was declared a Covenant-breaker.

Kheiralla would go on to form the "Society of Behaists," which would later be led by [Shua Ullah Behai](#) and eventually become defunct. Kheiralla had three children, two daughters

who were named Nabeeha and Labiba, and a son named George Ibrahim Kheirallah who converted Islam in the 1930s, becoming active in the Islamic Society of New York, and translated and published some poems of Khalil Gibran.

Ibrahim George Kheiralla died on March 6, 1929.



Comments

September 22. On this date in 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave a talk in Lincoln, Nebraska about "the corruption and iniquity of the Covenant-breaker" where he referred to his nephew as "Shu'á of darkness"

submitted 17 days ago by A35821363

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From "[Mahmúd's Diary: The Diary of Mírzá Mahmúd-i-Zarqání Chronicling 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Journey to America](#)"...

[Sunday, September 22, 1912](#)

[Lincoln](#)

In the morning the Master spoke about the animosity of the enemies and their evil intentions towards the [Blessed Beauty](#). Then the conversation turned to the corruption and iniquity of the [Covenant-breakers](#). He said:

[Shu'á](#) of darkness (289) wrote to his father quite openly that his purpose was to amass wealth and worldly property. With reference to me he stated that he was waiting for the fulfillment of the promise in the verse, 'God will assuredly send down one who will deal mercilessly with him.' (290)

(289) 'Abdu'l-Bahá here is speaking ironically in reference to His nephew [Shu'á'u'lláh](#), whose name means 'ray of light', as being 'of darkness', for shortly after the passing of Bahá'u'lláh he became a [Covenant-breaker](#), following in the footsteps of his father, [Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí](#), 'Abdu'l-Bahá's unfaithful half-brother.

(290) `Abdu'l-Bahá here is quoting a passage from the [Kitáb-i-Aqdas](#), paragraph 37...

Whoso layeth claim to a Revelation direct from God, ere the expiration of a full thousand years, such a man is assuredly a lying impostor. We pray God that He may graciously assist him to retract and repudiate such claim. Should he repent, God will, no doubt, forgive him. If, however, he persisteth in his error, God will, assuredly, send down one who will deal mercilessly with him. Terrible, indeed, is God in punishing! Whosoever interpreteth this verse otherwise than its obvious meaning is deprived of the Spirit of God and of His mercy which encompasseth all created things. Fear God, and follow not your idle fancies. Nay, rather, follow the bidding of your Lord, the Almighty, the All-Wise. Erelong shall clamorous voices be raised in most lands. Shun them, O My people, and follow not the iniquitous and evil-hearted. This is that of which We gave you forewarning when We were dwelling in 'Iráq, then later while in the Land of Mystery, and now from this Resplendent Spot.

[Shua'u'llah Behai](#) was born in [Qasr al-Mazra'a](#), ("Palace of Mazra'a") in the Acre District of Palestine in 1878. Shua'u'llah Behai was the eldest grandson of Bahá'u'lláh and the eldest son of Mírzá Muhammad `Alí, whom Bahá'u'lláh named Ghusn-i-Akbar, meaning "Greater Branch."

Shua Ullah Behai immigrated to the United States in 1904 where he led the Unitarian Baha'i denomination, and in 1914 he became a United States citizen in Los Angeles, becoming the first known descendant of the Baha'i prophet to have become an American citizen.

Behai compiled an introduction to the Baha'i faith in the 1940s, the documents of which were preserved by his niece [Nigar Bahai Amsalem](#) and published in [*A Lost History of the Baha'i Faith: The Progressive Tradition of Baha'u'llah's Forgotten Family](#).

From 1934 to 1937, Behai published [Behai Quarterly](#), a Unitarian Bahá'í magazine written in English and featuring the writings of Ghusn-i-Akbar and various other Unitarian Bahais.

Shua Ullah Behai died on July 3, 1950.



Comments

September 22. On this date in 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited the home of William Jennings Bryan in Lincoln, Nebraska. He was not home at the time, however, as he was busy campaigning for Woodrow Wilson in whose administration he would serve as Secretary of State.

submitted 17 days ago by A35821363

September 22. On this date in 1912, during his tour of North America, 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited the home of William Jennings Bryan in Lincoln, Nebraska. William Jennings Bryan was not home at the time, however, as he was busy campaigning for Woodrow Wilson in whose administration he would serve as Secretary of State. 'Abdu'l-Bahá met his wife and daughter instead. Reports of a Wilson-Bahá'í connection began to circulate among American Bahá'ís during Wilson's term as President from 1913 to 1921.

On May 5, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson sent a telegram to the US National Bahá'í Convention expressing his "gratitude to all concerned." Wilsonian principles were lauded by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. An avowed foreign interventionist, imperialist, and Social Darwinist who spread racial segregation in the federal government, Wilson's legacy is still defended by the Bahá'í Administrative Order.

The White House, Washington, May 5, 1916. My dear Mr Hall, the telegram you sent me on behalf of Bahá'ís of America, assembled in annual convention, has given me the deepest gratification and I hope you will have an opportunity to express my gratitude to all concerned. Cordially and sincerely yours, /s/ Woodrow Wilson.

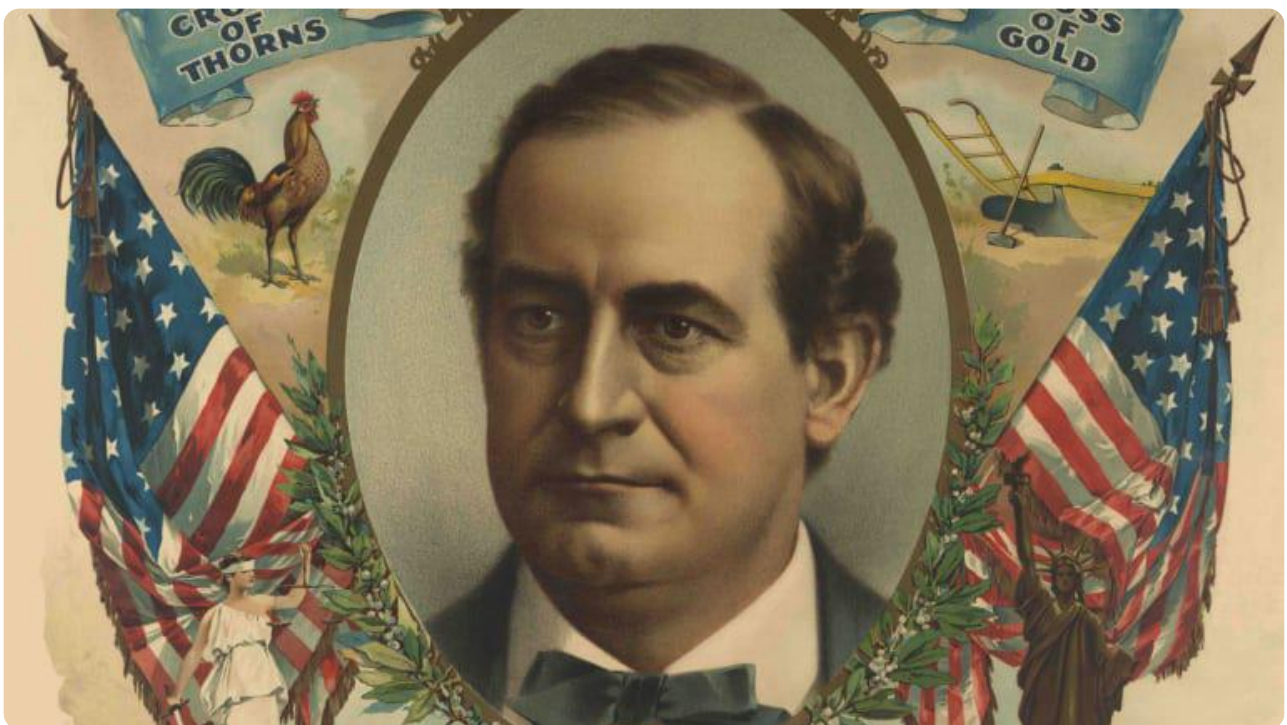
'Abdu'l-Bahá would later praise President Woodrow Wilson...

The President of the Republic, Dr. Wilson, is indeed serving the Kingdom of God for he is restless and strives day and night that the rights of all men may be preserved safe and

secure, that even small nations, like greater ones, may dwell in peace and comfort, under the protection of Righteousness and Justice. This purpose is indeed a lofty one. I trust that the incomparable Providence will assist and confirm such souls under all conditions.

On December 25, 1938 Shoghi Effendi wrote a letter, later published as [The Advent of Divine Justice](#) addressed "to the beloved of God and the handmaids of the Merciful throughout the United States and Canada," describing the role of America in establishing the Most Great Peace. The work is divided into five parts. The [fifth section](#) provides some concluding remarks. Shoghi Effendi states that American Bahá'í's faithfulness to the Bahá'í Faith has potentiated the United States to establish the Most Great Peace. Shoghi Effendi comments on contemporary events, lamenting America's move away from [Wilsonianism](#), "The ideals that fired the imagination of America's tragically unappreciated President, whose high endeavors, however much nullified by a visionless generation, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, through His own pen, acclaimed as signaling the dawn of the Most Great Peace, though now lying in the dust, bitterly reproach a heedless generation for having so cruelly abandoned them."

Wilson's legacy is still [defended by the Bahá'í Administrative Order](#).



Comments

September 22. On this date in 2007, 'Alí-Muhammad Varqá, the longest surviving Hand of the Cause of God, died in Haifa. From 1955 until his death he was also the Trustee of Ḥuqúqu'lláh, a position he inherited after the death of his father Valíyu'lláh, who had served as Trustee from 1938 to 1955.

submitted 17 days ago by A35821363

September 22. On this date in 2007, ['Alí-Muhammad Varqá](#), the longest surviving Hand of the Cause of God, died in Haifa. From 1955 until his death he was also the [Trustee of Ḥuqúqu'lláh](#), a position he inherited after the death of his father [Valíyu'lláh](#), who had served as [Trustee](#) from 1938 to 1955.

'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá was born January 1, 1912 in Tehran, Iran, to a distinguished Iranian Bahá'í Family. His grandfather, from whom he received his name was an Apostle of Bahá'u'lláh and his father Valíyu'lláh Varqá, was also the trustee of the Ḥuqúqu'lláh and a Hand of the Cause.

'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá obtained a doctorate from the Sorbonne in Paris in 1950, taught in Iran at the universities of Tabriz and Tehran, and served the Bahá'í community there in various administrative capacities. In 1979 he moved to Canada, and later established his residence in Haifa to serve at the Bahá'í World Centre.

He traveled to many countries as a representative first of Shoghi Effendi, then of the Universal House of Justice. In that capacity, Dr. Varqá attended the first National Conventions of Belgium, Luxembourg, the Congo, Mauritania, Central Africa Republic, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Czechoslovakia, Greenland, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova.

Upon his death, 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá was survived by three daughters and six siblings. His funeral took place on the morning of September 24, with burial in the Bahá'í cemetery in Haifa.



Comments

September 23. On this date in 1918, during World War I, General Allenby's British forces captured Haifa from the Ottomans, an event which Shoghi Effendi in 1936 would refer to as "the liberation of Palestine." Two years after General Allenby's conquest, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was knighted.

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September 23. On this date in 1918, during World War I, [General Allenby's](#) British forces captured Haifa from the Ottomans, an event which Shoghi Effendi in 1936 would refer to as "the liberation of Palestine." Two years after General Allenby's conquest, 'Abdu'l-Bahá "was created by [King George V](#) a [K.B.E.](#) for valuable services rendered to the British Government in the early days of the Occupation" was ceremonially knighted, an event which the "Star of the West" reported as "a most wonderful celebration."

[According](#) to [Harry Charles Luke](#), an official in the British Colonial Office who served as assistant Governor of Jerusalem,

Sir 'Abbas Effendi 'Abdu'l Baha had travelled extensively in Europe and America to expound his doctrines, and on the 4th December, 1919, was created by [King George V](#) a [K.B.E.](#) for valuable services rendered to the British Government in the early days of the Occupation.

On April 27, 1920, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was ceremonially knighted, an event which was [prominently reported](#) in the Bahá'í periodical [Star of the West](#).

THE following beautiful description of this event was written by Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi who was at that time in Haifa: "Among the kings and governments of the world who have be-

come convinced that Abdul Bahá was the well-wisher and the lover of mankind are King George and his government. The King sent a medal to Abdul Bahá with the title, "Sir", thus making him a member of his household. On the 27th of April, 1920, the Governor and high officials of Haifa, Palestine presented in a beautiful garden **a most wonderful celebration for the knighting of Abdul Baha**. Bahai pilgrims from Persia, America and all parts of the world were present. Mohammedan, Christian, Jewish leaders, clergymen, notables and local officials from Haifa, Acca and other towns attended. A tent was pitched in the center of the garden. **English troops stood on both sides, from the gate of the garden to the center where Abdul Bahá was seated.** The military music added wonderful melody to the rustling leaves of the beautiful trees. The breezes of the spring on that sunny afternoon imparted a remarkable vigor to the physical body just as the presence of Abdul Baha strengthened the souls. The Governor stood behind Abdul Bahá and, after a short speech, interpreted by Mr. Wadie Bistani, presented the medal. Then Abdul Baha, rising from his seat, gave a brief talk and a prayer for the British government.

BREAK

There have been many people who, for various reasons, [have refused British honours](#). Included among them are scientists like Francis Crick and Michael Faraday, musicians like David Bowie, and even devout British imperialists like T.E. Lawrence and Rudyard Kipling.

Benjamin Zephaniah refused his honour, stating "I get angry when I hear the word 'empire'; it reminds me of slavery, it reminds me of thousands of years of brutality, it reminds me of how my foremothers were raped and my forefathers brutalised."

Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, was offered a knighthood in 1925, but replied, "I prefer to be plain Mr. Jinnah."

Kenneth Williams bluntly put it in these terms: "When offered something which obviously isn't worth the price ... we still have the right to say 'No thanks.'"

Nitin Sawhney refused for ethical reasons, saying "I wouldn't like anything with the word 'empire' after my name."

'Abdu'l-Bahá held none of these objections and accepted his knighthood with great pomp and ceremony, in "a most wonderful celebration"

The Chosen Highway chronicles in some detail how 'Abdu'l-Bahá aided the British against the Ottomans during World War I. [For example...](#)

We learned that when the British marched into Haifa there was some difficulty about the [commissariat](#). The officer in command went to consult the Master.

"I have corn," was the reply.

"But for the army?" said the astonished soldier.

"I have corn for the British Army," said 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

He truly walked the Mystic way with practical feet. [footnote: Lady Blomfield often recounted how the corn pits proved a safe hiding-place for the corn, during the occupation of the Turkish army. -Ed.]

and later...

The British Government, with its usual gesture of appreciating a heroic act, conferred a [knighthood](#) upon 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbas, Who accepted this honour as a courteous gift "from a [just king](#)."

The dignitaries of the [British crown from Jerusalem](#) were gathered in Haifa, eager to do honour to the Master, Whom every one had come to love and reverence for His life of unselfish service. An imposing motor-car had been sent to bring 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the ceremony. The Master, however, could not be found. People were sent in every direction to look for Him, when suddenly from an unexpected side He appeared, alone, walking His kingly walk, with that simplicity of greatness which always enfolded Him.

The faithful servant, [Isfandiyar](#), whose joy it had been for many years to drive the Master on errands of mercy, stood sadly looking on at the elegant motor-car which awaited the honoured guest.

"No longer am I needed."

At a sign from Him, Who knew the sorrow, [old Isfandiyar](#) rushed off to harness the horse, and brought the carriage out at the lower gate, whence 'Abdu'l-Bahá was driven to a side entrance of the garden of the Governorate of Phoenicia.

So [Isfandiyar](#) was needed and happy.

Further collaboration is documented in [Chapter V: Danger to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, His Family and Friends, and How it was Averted](#)

On March 11, 1936, Shoghi Effendi wrote a letter later published as *The Unfolding of World Civilization*, a document included in the book titled [World Order of Bahá'u'lláh](#)

Within the *The Unfolding of World Civilization* are sections, such as one entitled [Collapse of Islam](#), in which Shoghi Effendi summarizes late Ottoman and early Turkish Republican history in these terms...

The murder of that arrogant despot in the year 1876; the Russo-Turkish conflict that soon followed in its wake; the wars of liberation which succeeded it; the rise of the Young Turk movement; the Turkish Revolution of 1909 that precipitated the downfall of 'Abdu'l-Ḥamíd; the Balkan wars with their calamitous consequences; **the liberation of Palestine** enshrining within its bosom the cities of 'Akká and Haifa, the world center of an emancipated Faith; **the further dismemberment decreed by the Treaty of Versailles**; the abolition of the Sultanate and the downfall of the House of Uthmán; the extinction of the Caliphate; the disestablishment of the State Religion; the annulment of the Sharí'ah Law and the promulgation of a universal Civil Code; the suppression of various orders, beliefs, traditions and ceremonials believed to be inextricably interwoven with the fabric of the Muslim Faith—these followed with an ease and swiftness that no man had dared envisage. In these devastating blows, administered by friend and foe alike, by Christian nations and professing Muslims, **every follower of the persecuted Faith of Bahá'u'lláh recognized evidences of the directing Hand of the departed Founder of his religion, Who, from the invisible Realm, was unloosing a flood of well-deserved calamities upon a rebellious religion and nation.** [World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, page 175](#)

Three thoughts from this passage:

1) Shoghi Effendi considers the British seizure of Palestine a "liberation." By the time *World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* was published in 1938, the British had permitted the immigration of hundreds of thousands of Jewish settlers to Palestine, and in 1937 the Peel Commission proposed a partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab sectors. The proposal was rejected by both the Arab and Jewish leadership. It is not mere conspiratorial inklings that lead detractors to consider the Bahá'í Faith to have ties to Zionism or British and Russian Imperialism.

2) Shoghi Effendi refers to "the further dismemberment decreed by the Treaty of Versailles" of the Ottoman Empire. The Treaty of Versailles was signed between Germany and some of the Allied nations, and it did not pertain to the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire would cease hostilities with Allies through the Armistice of Mudros, and Treaty of Sevres that was signed at the end of World War I was never ratified by the Ottoman Parlia-

ment in Istanbul. The nascent Republic of Turkey would later sign the Treaty of Lausanne with the Allies.

3) Shoghi Effendi describes the suffering of Ottoman subjects in World War I to have been "well-deserved calamities" unloosed by the "directing Hand" of Bahá'u'lláh. One wonders how anyone can equate [Bahá'u'lláh's exile](#), where he was still allowed to lead his religious community and publicly declare himself *Him whom God shall make manifest*, with the [suffering of World War I](#)

In the following section, [Deterioration of Christian Institutions](#), Shoghi Effendi similarly targets Christianity...

Time alone can reveal the nature of the rôle which the institutions directly associated with the Christian Faith are destined to assume in this, the [Formative Period](#) of the [Bahá'í Era](#), this dark age of transition through which humanity as a whole is passing. Such events as have already transpired, however, are of such a nature as can indicate the direction in which these institutions are moving. We can, in some degree, appraise the probable effect which the forces operating both within the Bahá'í Faith and outside it will exert upon them.

In the section titled [Community of the Most Great Name](#), Shoghi Effendi lauds the Bahá'ís...

Conscious of their high calling, confident in the society-building power which their Faith possesses, they press forward, undeterred and undismayed, in their efforts to fashion and perfect the necessary instruments wherein the embryonic [World Order of Bahá'u'lláh](#) can mature and develop. It is this building process, slow and unobtrusive, to which the life of the world-wide Bahá'í Community is wholly consecrated, that **constitutes the one hope of a stricken society**. For this process is actuated by the generating influence of God's changeless Purpose, and is evolving within the framework of the [Administrative Order of His Faith](#).

In a world the structure of whose political and social institutions is impaired, whose vision is befogged, whose conscience is bewildered, whose religious systems have become anemic and lost their virtue, **this healing Agency, this leavening Power, this cementing Force, intensely alive and all-pervasive, has been taking shape, is crystallizing into institutions, is mobilizing its forces, and is preparing for the spiritual conquest and the complete redemption of mankind**. Though the society which incarnates its ideals be small, and its direct and tangible benefits as yet inconsiderable, yet the potentialities with which it has been endowed, and through which it is destined to regenerate the individual and rebuild a broken world, are incalculable.

Shoghi Effendi continues in [Divine Retribution](#)...

Ominous indeed is the voice of Bahá'u'lláh that rings through these prophetic words: "O ye peoples of the world! Know, verily, that an unforeseen calamity followeth you, and grievous retribution awaiteth you. Think not that which ye have committed hath been effaced in My sight." And again: "We have a fixed time for you, O peoples. If ye fail, at the appointed hour, to turn towards God, He, verily, will lay violent hold on you, and will cause grievous afflictions to assail you from every direction. How severe, indeed, is the chastisement with which your Lord will then chastise you!"

He concludes with [World Unity the Goal](#)...

[A world federal system](#), ruling the whole earth and exercising unchallengeable authority over its unimaginably vast resources, blending and embodying the ideals of both the East and the West, liberated from the curse of war and its miseries, and bent on the exploitation of all the available sources of energy on the surface of the planet, a system in which Force is made the servant of Justice, whose life is sustained by its universal recognition of one God and by its allegiance to one common Revelation—such is the goal towards which humanity, impelled by the unifying forces of life, is moving.

...

What more fitting conclusion to this theme than these words of Bahá'u'lláh, written in anticipation of the golden age of His Faith—the age in which the face of the earth, from pole to pole, will mirror the ineffable splendors of the Abhá Paradise? "This is the Day whereon naught can be seen except the splendors of the Light that shineth from the face of thy Lord, the Gracious, the Most Bountiful. Verily, We have caused every soul to expire by virtue of Our irresistible and all-subduing sovereignty. We have then called into being a new creation, as a token of Our grace unto men. I am, verily, the All-Bountiful, the Ancient of Days. This is the Day whereon the unseen world crieth out: 'Great is thy blessedness, O earth, for thou hast been made the foot-stool of thy God, and been chosen as the seat of His mighty throne!' The realm of glory exclaimeth: 'Would that my life could be sacrificed for thee, for He Who is the Beloved of the All-Merciful hath established His sovereignty upon thee, through the power of His name that hath been promised unto all things, whether of the past or of the future.'"

Shoghi.

Haifa, Palestine,

March 11, 1936.



Comments

September 23. On this date in 1968, the UHJ wrote "We have not come across anything specific in the writings on transplants of hearts and other organs or regarding the time of death, and the Universal House of Justice does not wish to make any statements on these points at this time."

submitted 17 days ago by A35821363

September 23. On this date in 1968, the Universal House of Justice [wrote](#) "We have not come across anything specific in the writings on transplants of hearts and other organs or regarding the time of death, and the Universal House of Justice does not wish to make any statements on these points at this time."

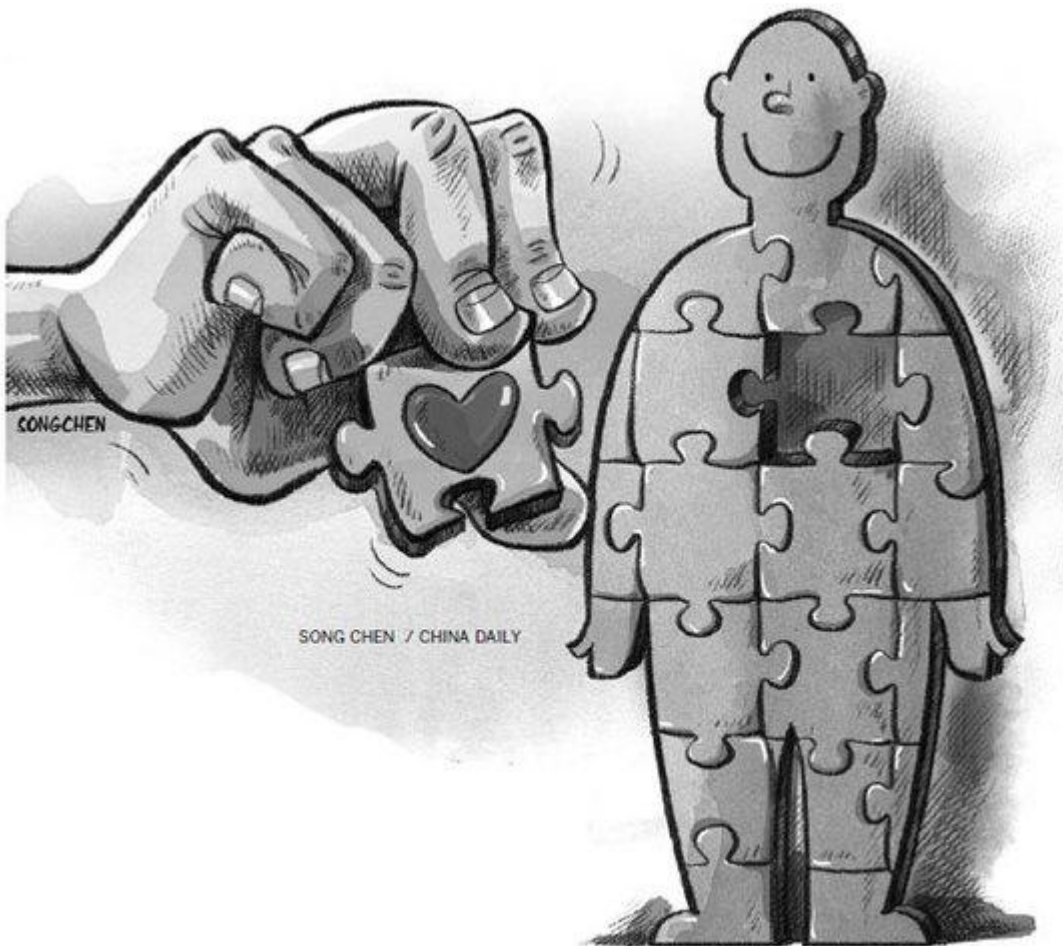
[983. Heart/Kidney Transplant](#)

"We have your letter of September 13, 1968, making inquiry about instructions which may apply to organ transplants such as the heart or kidney.

"On 18 September, 1968, we wrote to the National Spiritual Assembly of Argentina as follows:

'We have not come across anything specific in the writings on transplants of hearts and other organs or regarding the time of death, and the Universal House of Justice does not wish to make any statements on these points at this time.'

(From a letter of the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, September 23, 1968)



Comments

September 23. On this date in 2015, an individual emailed the Universal House of Justice expressing "concern that lack of translations of Arabic Bahá'í Writings into Persian may be preventing Iranians who are not proficient in Arabic from understanding the Arabic Writings, such as the Kitáb-i-Aqdas

submitted 17 days ago by A35821363

September 23. On this date in 2015, an individual [emailed](#) the Universal House of Justice expressing "concern that lack of translations of Arabic Bahá'í Writings into Persian may be preventing Iranians who are not proficient in Arabic from understanding the Arabic Writings, such as the [Kitáb-i-Aqdas](#)."

9 April 2018

[Transmitted by email](#)

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The Universal House of Justice has received your email letter of 23 September 2015 expressing your concern that lack of translations of Arabic Bahá'í Writings into Persian may be preventing Iranians who are not proficient in Arabic from understanding the Arabic Writings, such as the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. We have been instructed to write to you as follows. The delay in our reply is very much regretted.

Your seeking the advice of the House of Justice is warmly acknowledged. As you know, the Arabic Bahá'í Writings are not translated into the Persian language based on guidance of the beloved Guardian. There are no authorized Persian translations of any of the Arabic

Writings, including the Kitáb-i-Aqdas and the obligatory prayers, and publication of any Persian translation of the full text of an Arabic Sacred Text is not permitted. Latitude has been given, however, to using a personal translation or a gist of a passage in Persian for the purpose of enhancing understanding of the Writings, and these may be shared for this purpose with a few others—for instance, in the context of a study group. Moreover, the House of Justice has previously indicated that adding diacriticals to the Arabic words and explaining the meaning of difficult words are also acceptable means of assisting the friends to gain a better understanding of the Writings in Arabic.

Your concern about the ability of Iranians to study the Bahá'í Writings is appreciated. The House of Justice has indicated that care should be taken that limitations in understanding the Arabic Writings of the Twin Manifestations of God do not become an obstacle to reaching the masses of Persian-speaking peoples, who appear to be among the most receptive populations at present. It is hoped that the measures outlined above will prove to be adequate.

Be assured of the prayers of the House of Justice in the Holy Shrines that your services to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh may be blessed and confirmed.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat

To summarize rules of Bahá'í translations...

Arabic works cannot be translated into Persian.

Persian works cannot be translated into Arabic.

Persian and Arabic works can be translated "into Oriental languages such as Turkish and Urdu."

Persian and Arabic works can be translated into English.

Persian and Arabic works cannot be translated into non-English "European languages."

English works can be translated into non-English "European languages."

For further reading, please see ["Persian, Arabic, and Provisional Translations"](#), ["Translation and provisional translations"](#), ["Unveiling the Hidden Words, by Diana Malouf: Commentary on 'Translating the Hidden Words,' review by Franklin Lewis"](#), a letter dated June 27, 1933

from Shoghi Effendi to [Adelbert Mühlischlegel](#) about [Bahá'í orthography](#), a [letter dated June 30, 1999](#) from the Universal House of Justice outlining its procedures for approving provisional as opposed to authorized translations, and a [letter dated February 15, 1957](#) from Shoghi Effendi to French Bahá'ís.

On September 20, 1973, the UHJ [wrote](#) an NSA "when the Sacred Writings are published the standard English translation should be used, but there would be no objection to printing alongside it the translation into simple English which should be described as a paraphrase of the Holy Word."

[370. Translation of Bahá'í Literature into Everyday Language-- Simplifications and Paraphrasing Not to be Published as Scripture](#)

"The Universal House of Justice, in response to your letter of 20 April concerning translations into French or Creole using simpler words than the original text, has requested us to send the following three quotations. These make it clear that a quotation in English may be rendered into simple English in order to facilitate its translation into another language or dialect. However, it is not permissible to publish simplifications and paraphrased extracts of Bahá'í Writings as Bahá'í Scripture.

'We have noticed a tendency in a number of countries to attempt to translate Bahá'í literature into the current, easy, everyday language of the country. This, however, should not be an overriding consideration. Many of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh and Abdu'l-Bahá are in exalted and highly poetic language in the original Persian and Arabic and you will see, for example, that when translating Bahá'u'lláh's Writings into English the beloved Guardian did not use present-day colloquial English but evolved a highly poetic and beautiful style, using numbers of archaic expressions reminiscent of the translations of the Bible.' (From a letter dated 7 October 1973 written by the Universal House of Justice to a National Spiritual Assembly)

'Obviously teaching literature and books about the Faith can be written in simple English. However, we feel that when the Sacred Writings are published the standard English translation should be used, but there would be no objection to printing alongside it the translation into simple English which should be described as a paraphrase of the Holy Word. Thus, for the people of ... who have difficulty in comprehending standard English, the simple English version would be in the nature of an explanation of the Writings which they could understand. In the case of teaching literature in which quotations from the Writings appear, these could either be paraphrased or a simple English version could be used with the standard version printed as a footnote. This method would also provide a means

whereby the people of ... could improve their knowledge and understanding of the English language.' (From a letter dated 20 September 1973 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to a National Spiritual Assembly)

'It is, of course, permissible to translate Bahá'í Writings into other languages and dialects of languages. It is also possible to simplify or paraphrase the Bahá'í Writings in order to facilitate their translation into languages and dialects having small vocabularies. However, it is not permissible to publish simplifications and paraphrases of Bahá'í Writings as Bahá'í Scripture.'" (From a letter dated 13 March 1969 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to a National Spiritual Assembly)

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to the Spiritual Assembly of Guadeloupe, May 13, 1986)

On September 16, 1992, the Universal House of Justice [wrote](#) that Shoghi Effendi's English translation "of a Text should form the 'basis' for translations into other European languages" but "translations into Oriental languages such as Turkish and Urdu could be made directly from the original texts."

The Universal House of Justice

Bahá'í World Centre

Department of the Secretariat

16 September 1992

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The questions contained in your letter to ... about the language of Revelation and the status of Shoghi Effendi's translations were referred to the Universal House of Justice. We are instructed to convey the following response.

With respect to your inquiry about whether, in the Bahá'í context, English might possibly be regarded as a language of Revelation, the House of Justice asks us to explain that, while **Shoghi Effendi's translations of the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh into English carry with them a large measure of interpretation of the intent and purpose of the Author of the text -- an interpretation which he, as Interpreter of the Sacred Text, could alone authoritatively provide** -- one should not conclude that the English language into which the Writings were translated could, therefore, be considered as a language of Revelation.

As to the special status of Shoghi Effendi's translations, the beloved Guardian in a letter dated 15 November 1956 written on his behalf specified that **"this English translation" of a Text should form the "basis" for translations into other European languages.** The Universal House of Justice, in a letter of 8 September 1964 underlined the uniqueness of the translations of Shoghi Effendi and provided the following elucidation:

...the beloved Guardian was not only a translator but the inspired Interpreter of the Holy Writings; thus, where a passage in Persian or Arabic could give rise to two different expressions in English he would know which one to convey. Similarly he would be much better equipped than an average translator to know which metaphor to employ in English to express a Persian metaphor which might be meaningless in literal translation.

Thus, in general, **speakers of other European tongues will obtain a more accurate translation by following the Guardian's English translation than by attempting at this stage in Bahá'í history to translate directly from the original.**

This does not mean, however, that the translators should not also check their translation with the original texts if they are familiar with Persian or Arabic. There may be many instances where the exact meaning of the English text is unclear to them and this can be made evident by comparison with the original....

The Universal House of Justice has also clarified that while the English translations of the Guardian might serve as a useful resource, **translations into Oriental languages such as Turkish and Urdu could be made directly from the original texts.**

We are asked to assure you of the prayers of the Universal House of Justice for the confirmation of your services to the Cause of God.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

For Department of the Secretariat, ...



Comments

Baha'i History - September 24. On this date in 1924, Shoghi Effendi wrote American Bahá'ís "We have but to turn our eyes to the world without to realize the fierceness and the magnitude of the forces of darkness that are struggling with the dawning light of the Abhá Revelation."

submitted 12 days ago by A35821363

September 24. On this date in 1924, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#) American Bahá'ís "We have but to turn our eyes to the world without to realize the fierceness and the magnitude of the forces of darkness that are struggling with the dawning light of the Abhá Revelation."

Haifa, Palestine.

[September 24, 1924](#)

To my dearly-beloved brothers and sisters in 'Abdu'l-Bahá: care of the American National Spiritual Assembly.

Dearest friends:

The day is drawing near when, for the third time, we shall commemorate the world over the passing of our well-beloved `Abdu'l-Bahá. May we not pause for a moment, and gather our thoughts? How has it fared with us, His little band of followers, since that day? Whither are we now marching? What has been our achievement?

Menace of Social Chaos

We have but to turn our eyes to the world without to realize the fierceness and the magnitude of the forces of darkness that are struggling with the dawning light of the Abhá Revelation. Nations, though exhausted and disillusioned, have seemingly begun to cherish anew the spirit of revenge, of domination, and strife. Peoples, convulsed by economic upheavals, are slowly drifting into two great opposing camps with all their menace of social chaos, class hatreds, and worldwide ruin. Races, alienated more than ever before, are filled with mistrust, humiliation and fear, and seem to prepare themselves for a fresh and fateful encounter. Creeds and religions, caught in this whirlpool of conflict and passion, appear to gaze with impotence and despair at this spectacle of unceasing turmoil.

Such is the plight of mankind three years after the passing of Him from whose lips fell unceasingly the sure message of a fast-approaching Divine salvation. Are we by our thoughts, our words, our deeds, whether individually or collectively, preparing the way? Are we hastening the advent of the Day He so often foretold?

None can deny that the flame of faith and love which His mighty hand kindled in many hearts has, despite our bereavement, continued to burn as brightly and steadily as ever before. Who can question that His loved ones, both in the East and the West, notwithstanding the insidious strivings of the enemies of the Cause, have displayed a spirit of unshakable loyalty worthy of the highest praise? What greater perseverance and fortitude than that which His tried and trusted friends have shown in the face of untold calamities, intolerable oppression, and incredible restrictions? But such staunchness of faith, such an unsullied love, such magnificent loyalty, such heroic constancy, such noble courage, however unprecedented and laudable in themselves, cannot alone lead us to the final and complete triumph of such a great Cause. Not until the dynamic love we cherish for Him is sufficiently reflected in its power and purity in all our dealings with our fellow-men, however remotely connected and humble in origin, can we hope to exalt in the eyes of a self-seeking world the genuineness of the all-conquering love of God. Not until we live ourselves the life of a true Bahá'í can we hope to demonstrate the creative and transforming potency of the Faith we profess. Nothing but the abundance of our actions, nothing but the purity of our lives and the integrity of our characters, can in the last resort establish our claim that the Bahá'í spirit is in this day the sole agency that can translate a long-cherished ideal into an enduring achievement.

Paramount Duty of Every Bahá'í

With this vision clearly set before us, and fortified by the knowledge of the gracious aid of Bahá'u'lláh and the repeated assurances of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, let us first strive to live the life

and then arise with one heart, one mind, one voice, to reinforce our numbers and achieve our end. Let us recall, and seek on this sad occasion the comfort of, the last wishes of our departed yet ever-watchful Master:--

"It behooveth them not to rest for a moment, neither to seek repose. They must disperse themselves in every land, pass by every clime, and travel throughout all regions. Bestirred, without rest, and steadfast to the end, they must raise in every land the triumphal cry 'Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá!' (O Thou the Glory of Glories).... The disciples of Christ forgot themselves and all earthly things, forsook all their cares and belongings, purged themselves of self and passion, and with absolute detachment scattered far and wide and engaged in calling the peoples of the world to the divine guidance; till at last they made the world another world, illumined the surface of the earth, and even to their last hour proved self-sacrificing in the pathway of that beloved One of God. Finally in various lands they suffered glorious martyrdom. Let them that are men of action follow in their footsteps!"

Having grasped the significance of these words, having obtained a clear understanding of the true character of our mission, the methods to adopt, the course to pursue, and having attained sufficiently the individual regeneration--the essential requisite of teaching-- **let us arise to teach His Cause with righteousness, conviction, understanding and vigor. Let this be the paramount and most urgent duty of every Bahá'í.** Let us make it the dominating passion of our life. Let us scatter to the uttermost corners of the earth; sacrifice our personal interests, comforts, tastes and pleasures; mingle with the divers kindreds and peoples of the world; familiarize ourselves with their manners, traditions, thoughts and customs; arouse, stimulate and maintain universal interest in the Movement, and at the same time endeavor by all the means in our power, by concentrated and persistent attention, to enlist the unreserved allegiance and the active support of the more hopeful and receptive among our hearers. Let us too bear in mind the example which our beloved Master has clearly set before us. Wise and tactful in His approach, wakeful and attentive in His early intercourse, broad and liberal in all His public utterances, cautious and gradual in the unfolding of the essential verities of the Cause, passionate in His appeal yet sober in argument, confident in tone, unswerving in conviction, dignified in His manners--such were the distinguishing features of our Beloved's noble presentation of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

If we all choose to tread faithfully His path, surely the day is not far distant when our beloved Cause will have emerged from the inevitable obscurity of a young and struggling Faith into the broad daylight of universal recognition. **This is our duty, our first obligation.** Therein lies the secret of the success of the Cause we love so well. Therein lies the

hope, the salvation of mankind. Are we fully conscious of our responsibilities? Do we realize the urgency, the sacredness, the immensity, the glory of our task?

I entreat you, dear friends, to continue, nay, to redouble your efforts, to keep your vision clear, your hopes undimmed, your determination unshaken, so that the power of God within us may fill the world with all its glory.

In this fervent plea joins me the Greatest Holy Leaf. Though chagrined in the evening of her life at the sorrowful tales of repression in Persia, she still turns with the deepest longings of her heart to your land where freedom reigns, eager and expectant to behold, ere she is called away, the signs of the universal triumph of the Cause she loves so dearly.

SHOGHI.



Comments

Baha'i History - September 24. On this date in 1938, Shoghi Effendi wrote "Loyalty to world order of Bahá'u'lláh...champion builders of the American continent...that sustains system of God's essentially supra-national, supernatural order so laboriously evolved, so recently established."

submitted12 days agobyA35821363

September 24. On this date in 1938, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#) "Loyalty to world order of Bahá'u'lláh...champion builders of the American continent...that sustains system of God's essentially supra-national, supernatural order so laboriously evolved, so recently established."

[LOYALTY TO WORLD ORDER OF Bahá'u'lláh](#)

Loyalty to world order of Bahá'u'lláh, security of its basic institutions, both imperatively demand all its avowed supporters, particularly its champion builders of the American continent, in these days when sinister, uncontrollable forces are deepening the cleavage sundering peoples, nations, creeds, and classes, resolve despite pressure of fast crystallizing public opinion, abstain individually, collectively in word, action, informally as well as in all official utterances and publications from assigning blame, taking sides, however indirectly, in recurring political crises now agitating, ultimately engulfing human society. Grave apprehension lest cumulative effect of such compromises disintegrate fabric, clog channel of grace that sustains system of God's essentially supra-national, supernatural order so laboriously evolved, so recently established.

Cablegram September 24, 1938



Comments

Baha'i History - September 24. On this date in 1978, the UHJ wrote "Because of the overwhelming significance of the Bahá'í message and the Bahá'í Revelation, any such film produced under the aegis of the Bahá'í community would have to be of the very highest quality in all respects."

submitted 12 days ago by A35821363

September 24. On this date in 1978, the UHJ [wrote](#) "Because of the overwhelming significance of the Bahá'í message and the Bahá'í Revelation, any such film produced under the aegis of the Bahá'í community would have to be of the very highest quality in all respects."

[345. Need for Skill to Produce an Effective Film about History of the Faith](#)

"As you are no doubt aware, it is not permissible to portray the Manifestations of God in dramatic works and it can be understood that great skill will be needed to produce an effective film about the history of the Faith in which neither the Bab nor Bahá'u'lláh could actually appear. Because of the overwhelming significance of the Bahá'í message and the Bahá'í Revelation, any such film produced under the aegis of the Bahá'í community would have to be of the very highest quality in all respects."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to a National Spiritual Assembly, September 24, 1978)

The Gate, Anis, The Miller Prediction, Mona's Dream, A Woman and Her Words



Comments

Baha'i History - September 24. On this date in 1992, the NSA of the U.S. wrote a letter addressing issues raised in Christian philosopher and scholar Francis J. Beckwith's book "Baha'i," specifically the modification of dates in recent editions of J.E. Esselmont's "Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era".

submitted12 days agobyA35821363

September 24. On this date in 1992, the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States [wrote a letter](#) addressing issues raised in Christian philosopher and scholar [Francis J. Beckwith's](#) book [Baha'i](#), specifically the modification of dates in recent editions of [J.E. Esselmont's Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era](#).

[September 24, 1992](#)

Dear Bahá'í Friend:

The National Spiritual Assembly has received your letter dated 21 September 1992 concerning Francis Beckwith and questions he has raised in his book the Bahá'í Faith about the text of recent editions of J.E. Esselmont's Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era, we are sending the following.

Mr. Francis Beckwith is a Christian who has spoken and written against the Bahá'í Faith from the point of view of fundamentalist Christian doctrine. The National Assembly has not written any refutations of his work and does not feel this would be productive at the present time. However, the National Assembly does provide the following comments about the prophecy of Daniel of the 1335 days and the reason for the removal of passages

pertaining to this prophecy from J.E. Esslemont's Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era to individuals who inquire.

In a letter dated 11 November 1969, the Universal House of Justice has discussed the changes made for the new edition of Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era. Although Mr. Esslemont had interpreted certain statements made by `Abdu'l-Bahá to mean that Universal Peace would be firmly established in the year 1957, the explanations of the fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel are somewhat complicated and incomplete. Therefore, the paragraph in which Mr. Esslemont calculates the date from the Hijrah has been omitted in recent editions of the book.

In a letter dated 4 May 1946 written on behalf of the Guardian, the following clarifications of Mr. Esslemont's comments were given:

As regards the statement in Esslemont: We cannot be absolutely certain of what the Master said because it is not in a Tablet; He did state, however, in 2 Tablets, that this date will see the triumph of the Cause. Reference is made to these Tablets in "The Passing of Abdu'l-Bahá," and the Master's words quoted. Abdu'l-Bahá, in a Tablet quoted on page 28 of "The Passing of `Abdu'l-Bahá", appears to identify the prophecy with the year 1963: Now concerning the verse in Daniel, the interpretation whereof thou didst ask, namely, "Blessed is he who cometh unto the thousand three hundred and thirty five days." These days must be reckoned as solar and not [page 2] lunar years. For according to this calculation a century will have elapsed from the dawn of the Sun of Truth... (i.e., a century after 1863).

Another Tablet quoted in the same place indicates: O servant of God! The afore-mentioned thousand three hundred and thirty-five years must be reckoned from the day of the flight of His Holiness Muhammad, the Apostle of God, (Hegira) salutations and blessings rest upon Him, at the close of which time the signs of the rise, the glory, the exaltation, the spread of the Word of God throughout the East and the West shall appear. (Further prophecies of Daniel are discussed by `Abdu'l-Bahá in Some Answered Questions, part 1, chapter 10). The Guardian indicated that Daniel's prophecy alluded to the year 1963. Referring to the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdad [1863], the Guardian indicated:

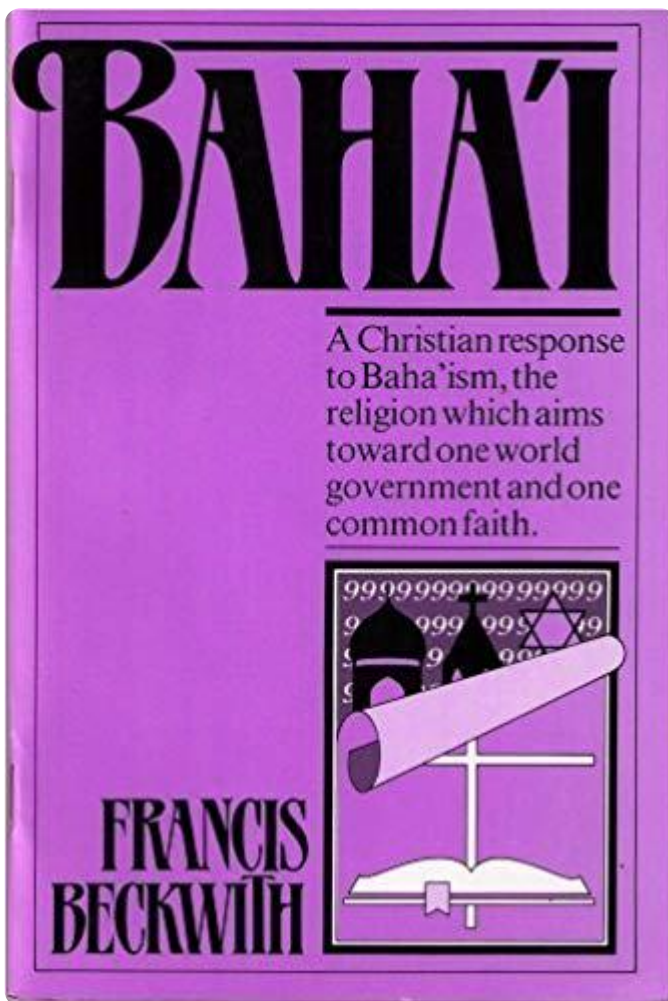
The "hundred lunar years" destined to immediately precede that blissful consummation (1335 days), announced by Daniel in that same chapter, had commenced." (God Passes By, page 151). In another letter written on behalf of the Guardian in December 1953, the prophecy is linked to the completion of the goals of the Ten Year Crusade (1953-63):The

1335 days is figured according to the solar calendar, but in adjusting the 1335 days, one must take into consideration the time at which the prophecies were given and change them into solar time, which would bring the date to 1963. There is one thing of importance for the Bahá'ís to understand; and that is, that this prophecy refers to happenings within the Faith, not occurrences outside the Faith. It refers specifically to the spread of the Faith over the face of the earth. This will be accomplished when the Bahá'í Faith is firmly established in all the virgin areas outlined in the Ten-Year Crusade, and the other goals of the Crusade are completed. Thus it behooves us to work day and night to accomplish this glorious goal. The Universal House of Justice explains in its letter of November 11, 1969, mentioned above, that: these passages do not give exactly the same date and cover a period of time rather than a specific year. However, it is apparent from the Guardian's letter dated 30th June 1952 that the crucial date in this period is Ridvan 1963, the occasion of the celebration of the centenary of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh. [page 3] Thus, it is clear that Mr. Esslemont's interpretation of the statements made to him by Abdu'l-Bahá cannot be wholly supported by the authorized texts of Abdu'l-Bahá and the explanations of the Guardian. As you know, Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era has often been used to introduce the Bahá'í Teachings to the public, and, as such, it was important that the teachings be represented as accurately as possible in the text. The fact that changes have been made to Mr. Esslemont's original text has been clearly pointed out in the prefaces to the various editions of the book. The preface to the 1937 edition, prepared by the Bahá'í Publishing Committee, explained:

As Dr. Esslemont himself recognized, the Faith entered a new phase of its history after the ascension of Abdu'l-Bahá. The result is that the author's views, some of them written prior to 1921, no longer on certain aspects of the subject correspond to the evolutionary character of the Faith. His treatment of events and social conditions then existing, moreover, no longer appears fully relevant. Unavoidably, a few errors of fact had entered his text, while his explanation of the stations of the Bab and of Abdu'l-Bahá have been replaced in the minds of Bahá'ís by the authoritative interpretations since made by the first Guardian of the Faith, Shoghi Effendi. The present edition therefore represents a revision made by the American National Spiritual Assembly, acting under the advice and approval of Shoghi Effendi. These revisions in no respect alter the original plan of Dr. Esslemont's book, nor affect the major portion of his text. Their purpose has been to amplify the author's discussion in a few passages by the addition of material representing the fuller knowledge available since his lamented

death, and newer translations of his quotations from Bahá'í Sacred Writings. From the Preface to the 1950 Edition: ...This edition does not displace the text as it has appeared since major revision was made in the book under the direction of the Guardian of the Faith in 1937, as the time has not come for anything like a thorough recasting of the book to make its references to world conditions completely contemporaneous...It should be added that any further revision of the text in the future is subject to approval by Shoghi Effendi. The Committee has no authority to pass upon revisions which may be desired by Bahá'ís of other countries for their particular need. Finally, the Bahá'í Publishing Trust prefaced its 1970 edition as follows: Since 1937 no revision has been made to the text of Dr. Esslemont's book, although in 1950 some minor corrections were introduced. On the other hand, the diffusion and development of the Bahá'í Faith since that time have been tremendous, and there has been added to the Bahá'í [page 4] bibliography a rich legacy of incomparable expositions, translations, and historical accounts from the pen of Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Faith and the appointed interpreter of its Sacred Writings. It has therefore been deemed necessary to bring the book up to date in order to maintain its usefulness for modern readers. This has been done with a minimum of alteration to the text, and chiefly by the use of footnotes and of an epilogue giving the current statistics of the Bahá'í Faith...

We thank you very much for your response to the questions of the seeker who had read this book and hope that the above will be of use should you encounter such questions again in the future. We are also enclosing a copy of a review of a book by William Miller which refutes issues similar to those raised by Francis Beckwith. With warm regards, For the Office of the Secretary Enclosure: Douglas Martin, Missionary as Historian: William Miller and the Bahá'í Faith



Comments

Baha'i History - September 24. On this date in 2000, the UHJ wrote all NSAs about the Millennium Forum, noting the BIC "took part so notably in these occurrences that have set down milestones along the way towards that new World Order so clearly foreshadowed by the Pen of Bahá'u'lláh."

submitted12 days ago by A35821363



Comments

September 24. On this date in 1941, a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the Boltons stated that "he was delighted to hear that you are both going to teach the Cause in Hobart, Tasmania." In 1954, Stanley Bolton would be named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for ...

submitted 12 days ago by A35821363

September 24. On this date in 1941, [a letter written](#) on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the Boltons stated that "he was delighted to hear that you are both going to teach the Cause in Hobart, Tasmania." In 1954, Stanley Bolton would be named a [Knight of Bahá'u'lláh](#) for his pioneering to the [Tonga Islands](#).

What has always struck me about the designation of Knights of Bahá'u'lláh is the arbitrariness with which the "virgin territories" were defined. For example, the [Cook Islands](#) and [Tonga Island](#), both part of the [Realm of New Zealand](#) have distinct sets of Knights, while [Niue](#) and the [Chatham Islands](#), also part of the [Realm of New Zealand](#), are Knightless.

Several islands off the coast of Alaska have distinct Knights, like [Baranof Island](#) , Kodiak Island, and the [Aleutian Islands](#). Yet other Alaskan islands, like the [Pribilof Islands](#) are Knightless.

The Brazilian state of [Amapá](#) has its own Knights (for [Portuguese Guiana](#)), while the other [Brazilian states](#) are Knightless.

Crete and Rhodes have Knights distinct from the Knights of mainland Greece, yet other Greek islands, like Santorini and Samos, are Knightless.

Key West has its own Knight, yet the other Florida Keys are Knightless.

Tiny islands, like Grand Manan, have their own Knights. St. Thomas Island has its own Knight, yet the remaining Leeward Islands have one set of Knights, representing numerous politically and geographically independent islands. Similarly, the Windward Islands have one set of Knights, representing numerous politically and geographically independent islands.



Comments

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submitted12 days ago by A35821363

September 24. On this date in 1951, [a cablegram](#) sent by Shoghi Effendi to all NSAs announced that after "prolonged, delicate negotiations involving Ministries of Finance and Religious Affairs and Haifa Municipality have culminated in agreement in principle to purchase approximately twenty-two thousand meter area, estimated value hundred eighteen thousand dollars, situated on slope of Mount Carmel."

[Acquisition of Area on Mount Carmel](#)

Announce to National Assemblies of Bahá'í world that prolonged, delicate negotiations involving Ministries of Finance and [Religious Affairs](#) and Haifa Municipality have culminated in agreement in principle to purchase approximately twenty-two thousand meter area, estimated value hundred eighteen thousand dollars, situated on slope of Mount Carmel overlooking resting-place of [Greatest Holy Leaf](#) and eastern approaches to Báb's Sepulcher.

Acquisition of area extending from heart to ridge of mountain safeguards precincts of sacred Mausoleum now in process of erection, broadens basis of administrative structure of rising World Center of Faith in Holy Land, may induce civil authorities to abandon

project construction of arterial road crossing diagonally Bahá'í international endowments, and facilitates extension of terraces ultimately stretching from foot to crown of God's Holy Mountain.

Contemplating transfer part of title deeds of land in question to Israel branches of American, Indian National Assemblies, reserving remainder for future transfer to other National Assemblies following upon incorporation of their respective branches on soil of Holy Land.

--Shoghi

[Cablegram, September 24, 1951]

On December 16, 1950, a little over a year after the international recognition of the State of Israel, the mansion at [Mazra'a](#) was leased from the Israeli government by the Bahá'í Administrative Order. Bahá'u'lláh lived there from 1877 until 1879, before moving to the [Mansion at Bahjí](#).

The transaction is [described in Baha'i News, no. 244, June 1951, p. 4](#)

Masra'ih is a Moslem religious endowment, and it is consequently impossible, under existing laws in this country, for it to be sold. However, as the friends are aware, the Ministry of Religions, due to the direct intervention of the Minister himself, [Rabbi Maimon](#), consented, in the face of considerable opposition, to deliver Masra'ih to the Baha'is as a Holy Place to be visited by Baha'i pilgrims. This means that we rent it from the Department of Moslem and Druze affairs in the Ministry of Religions. The head of this Department is also a Rabbi, Dr. Hirschberg. Recently he, his wife and party, visited all the Baha'i properties in Haifa and 'Akka, following upon a very pleasant tea party in the Western Pilgrim House with the members of the International Baha'i Council.

The mansion at [Mazra'a](#) would later be purchased by the Bahá'í Administrative Order from the Israeli government as [reported in Messages from the Universal House of Justice 1968-1973, published 1976; Ridván Message 1973, p. 119](#)

The Mansion of Mazra'ih, often referred to by the beloved Guardian as one of the "twin mansions" in which the Blessed Beauty resided after nine years within the walled prison-city of 'Akká, and dear to the hearts of the believers by reason of its associations with their Lord, has at last been purchased together with 24,000 square meters of land extending into the plain on its eastward side.

On January 21, 1949, Shoghi Effendi met with [David Ben Gurion](#). In the chapter titled *The Heart and Nerve Centre* in her book *The Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith*, [Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum](#) describes this meeting...

In January 1949 [Mr. Ben Gurion](#), the Prime Minister of the [Provisional Government](#), came to Haifa on his first official visit and the [Mayor](#) naturally invited Shoghi Effendi to attend the reception being given in his honour by the Municipality. The dilemma was acute, for if the Guardian did not go, it would, with every reason, be taken as an affront to the new Government, and if he did go he would inevitably be submerged in a sea of people where any pretence at protocol would be swept away (this was indeed the case, as my father, Shoghi Effendi's representative, reported after he returned from this reception). The Guardian therefore decided that as he would not be attending, but was more than willing to show courtesy to the Prime Minister of the new State, he would call upon him in person. With great difficulty this was arranged through the good offices of the [Mayor of Haifa, Shabatay Levy](#), as [Mr. Ben Gurion](#)'s time in Haifa was very short and it was only two days before the first general election in the new State.

The interview took place on Friday evening, January 21st, in the private home the Prime Minister was staying in on Mt. Carmel and lasted about fifteen minutes. [Ben Gurion](#) enquired about the Faith and Shoghi Effendi's relation to it and asked if there was a book he could read; Shoghi Effendi answered his questions and assured him he would send him a copy of his own book [God Passes By](#) — which he later did, and which was acknowledged with thanks. Typical of the whole history of the Cause and the constant problems that beset it was a long article which appeared in the leading English-language newspaper on December 20, 1948, in which, in the most favourable terms, its teachings were set forth and the station of Shoghi Effendi as its World Head mentioned. On January 28, 1949, there appeared in the letter column of this paper a short and extraordinary statement, signed "Bahai U.N. Observer", which flatly refuted the article and asserted, "Mr. Rabbani is not the Guardian of the Bahai faith, nor its World Leader" and gave the [New History Society](#) in New York as a source of further information

As there was no such thing as a "Bahai U.N. Observer" this move was plainly inspired by the once-more hopeful [band of old Covenant-breakers](#), who sought, at the outset of a new regime, to blacken Shoghi Effendi's reputation and divert attention from his station by referring to [Ahmad Sohrab](#)'s rootless group in America. At a later date, when in 1952 the [Covenant-breakers](#) in [Bahji](#) brought their case in the local courts against Shoghi Effendi for the demolition of an old building near the [Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh](#), [Sohrab](#) sought, unsuccessfully, to bring pressure on the [Minister of Religious Affairs](#) to discredit the Bahá'í

claims. It was with attacks such as this, both open and covert, that the Guardian, on the threshold of a new phase in the development of the affairs of the Faith at its World Centre, once more had to content.

It had long been the desire of Shoghi Effendi to obtain control of the [Mansion at Mazra'ih](#), where Bahá'u'lláh had first lived when He quitted once-for-all the walls of the prison-city of 'Akka. This property was a [Muslim religious endowment](#) and had now fallen vacant. It was planned by the government to turn it into a rest home for officials. All efforts, through the departments concerned, to procure this property were unavailing until Shoghi Effendi appealed directly to [Ben Gurion](#), explaining its significance to the Bahá'ís and his desire to have it visited by pilgrims as a place so closely associated with Bahá'u'lláh. The [Prime Minister](#) himself then intervened in the matter and it was leased to the Bahá'ís as an historic site. Shoghi Effendi proudly informed the Bahá'í world, on December 16, 1950, that its keys had been delivered to us, by the Israeli authorities, after the lapse of more than fifty years.

The affairs of the Bahá'í Community, in matters concerning its day-to-day dealings with the government in connection with the work at the World Centre, had been placed under the jurisdiction of the [Ministry of Religious Affairs](#) and was at first handled by the head of the Department that dealt with Muslim affairs. This Shoghi Effendi violently objected to as it implied the Faith was in some way identified with Islam. After much negotiation a letter was received from the Minister of Religious Affairs, dated December 13, 1953, addressed to "His Eminence, Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, World Head of the Bahá'í Faith" in which he said:

"...I am pleased to inform you of my decision to establish in our Ministry a separate Department for the Bahá'í Faith. I hope that this department will be of assistance to you in matters concerning the Bahá'í Centre in our State.

In the name of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the State of Israel, I wish to assure Your Eminence that full protection will be given to the Holy Places as well as to the World Centre of the Bahá'í Faith."

The victory was all the more welcome, following as it did the previously mentioned court case against Shoghi Effendi brought on a technicality by the [Covenant-breakers](#) in connection with the demolition of a house adjoining the [Shrine and Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh in Bahji](#). Never tired of seeking to publicly humiliate and discredit the Head of the Faith, be it 'Abdu'l-Bahá or the Guardian, they had had the temerity to summon Shoghi Effendi to appear in court as a witness. Once more, greatly concerned for the honour of the Cause at its World Centre, Shoghi Effendi appealed direct to the Prime Minister, sending as his

representatives the President, [Secretary-General and Member-at-Large](#) of the [International Bahá'í Council](#) (whom he had summoned from Italy for this purpose) to Jerusalem on more than one visit to press the strategy he himself had devised. These representations were successful and on the grounds of its being a purely religious issue it was removed by Government from the jurisdiction of the civil courts. As soon as the plaintiffs found their plan to humiliate Shoghi Effendi had been forestalled, they were willing to settle the case by negotiation. That the authorities and the Bahá'í Community were equally pleased by this conclusion of the matter is shown in these letters written to the Guardian by members of the Prime Minister's staff — two men to whom the Faith owed much for their sympathetic efforts on its behalf at that time:

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE Jerusalem, 19th May, 1952. His Eminence Shoghi Rabbani,
World Head of the Bahá'í Faith,

Haifa. Your Eminence, I am instructed to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 16th May addressed to the Prime Minister. As you are no doubt aware, the dispute between yourself as the World head of the Bahá'í Faith and members of the family of the founder of the Faith has found its solution and there is no need, therefore, to take any administrative action in order to solve the problem. May I express to you our gratitude for your wise and benevolent attitude taken in the dispute which enabled us to impose a just and, as we hope, a lasting solution on the dissident group? The Prime Minister assures you of his personal esteem and sends you his best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

S. Eynath

Legal Adviser

It is significant to note that they address Shoghi Effendi as "His Eminence", a title which, though still far below what his position merited, was the one that had been introduced in the earliest days of his ministry, but never really used by any officials until the formation of the Jewish State.

The cordial nature of the relations established between the Guardian and the officials of the State of Israel encouraged Shoghi Effendi to ascertain if the President would care to visit the Bahá'í Shrine in Haifa; when word was received that he would accept such an invitation, Shoghi Effendi formally invited him to do so and arrangements were made for the morning of April 26, 1954, at which time, the Director of the President's Office wrote to

Shoghi Effendi, the President would "be pleased to pay you an official visit". Accordingly the [President](#) and his wife arrived at the [home of the Master](#), attended by two officials, partook of light refreshment and were presented by the Guardian with a Persian album, painted with miniatures and bound in silver, containing some photographs of the Shrines, as a memento of their visit. The Presidential party, with Shoghi Effendi and those who accompanied him, then proceeded to the gardens on Mt. Carmel. It was the first time in the history of the Cause that the Head of an independent nation had ever made an official visit of this kind and it constituted another milestone in the development of the World Centre of the Faith. The [President](#) and his companions showed the greatest respect to the [Shrine of the Bab](#), removing their shoes as we did, before entering it, the men keeping their hats on out of reverence as Jews for a holy place; it was a very moving moment to see [President Ben Zvi](#) standing beside Shoghi Effendi, the former with his European hat, the latter with his simple black fez, before the threshold. After a few words of explanation from Shoghi Effendi we all withdrew and walked about the gardens for a few minutes before saying good-bye in front of the [Oriental Pilgrim House](#) where the [President's](#) car was awaiting him.

On April 29th the [President](#) wrote personally to the Guardian: "I should like to express my thanks for your kind hospitality and for the interesting time I spent with you visiting the beautiful Gardens and remarkable Shrine... I do appreciate the friendship which the Bahá'í Community has for Israel and it is my sincere hope that we may all live to see the strengthening of amity between all peoples on earth." On May 5th the Guardian replied to this letter in equally warm terms: "...It was a great pleasure to meet [Your Excellency](#) and [Mrs. Ben Zvi](#), and be able to show you one of our places of Bahá'í pilgrimage in Israel... If it suits your convenience, [Mrs. Rabbani](#) and I, accompanied by [Mr. Ioas](#), would like to call upon [Your Excellency](#) and [Mrs. Ben Zvi](#) in Jerusalem..." The time for this return call was set for the afternoon of May 26th and we had tea and a pleasant conversation with the [President](#) and [his wife](#), in her own way as much a personality as her husband and equally nice. In the interim between these two visits Shoghi Effendi had sent to the [President](#) some Bahá'í books which he had promised him and these had been acknowledged with the thanks of the [President](#) and the assurance that he would read them with great interest. Ever meticulous in all matters, Shoghi Effendi wrote on June 3rd to the [President](#): "I wish to thank you and [Mrs. Ben Zvi](#) for your kind hospitality. [Mrs. Rabbani](#) and I enjoyed our visit with you very much, and I feel sure that this opportunity we have had of visiting with you our Bahá'í Holy Places and calling upon you in the capital of Israel has served to reinforce the bonds of affection and esteem which unite the Bahá'ís to the people and Government of Israel.

With kind regards to you and Mrs. Ben Zvi..." Thus ended another memorable chapter in the process of winning recognition for the Faith at its World Centre.



Comments

Baha'i History - September 25. On this date 1989, the Universal House of Justice wrote about the function and importance of "Bahá'í review."

submitted12 days ago by A35821363

September 25. On this date 1989, the Universal House of Justice [wrote](#) about the function and importance of "Bahá'í review."

Department of the Secretariat

25 September 1989

[To an individual]

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The Universal House of Justice has received your letter of 7 June 1989, concerning a writing project which you had been contemplating in collaboration with a professional filmmaker and writer who is not a Bahá'í, and we have been asked to send you the following reply with an expression of regret for the delay due to pressure of work.

Given the long history and overwhelming current examples of repression in the world, it is not surprising that in a country like the United States, which upholds freedom of speech as a cardinal principle, the non-Bahá'í collaborator in a filmmaking project, such as you have described, would be concerned about any perceived, or misperceived, notion of censorship. As you know, review of manuscripts before publication is a discipline which the Bahá'í community applies to its own members as a temporary necessity, for it is anticipated that in due time this practice will cease. The reason is simple: At this early stage in the development of the Bahá'í Faith, which is striving against great odds to establish itself in a world that is highly critical, often antagonistic towards new ideas, and whose communications media tend to emphasize negative information, it is important that Bahá'í authors, scriptwriters and filmmakers endeavor to present the Faith with accuracy and dignity. It is

one thing for a non-Bahá'í to make erroneous statements about the Faith; this can be excused on the basis of ignorance. But for a Bahá'í to make such errors is quite a different thing, because he is considered to be knowledgeable about that which he espouses.

Therefore, a Bahá'í author is expected to ensure to the extent possible a correct representation of the Faith in his work; as an aid he draws upon the reviewing facilities provided by Bahá'í institutions. A great many authors spontaneously and informally submit their manuscripts to a type of review, although they would not necessarily call it that, when they request the comments and criticisms of persons whose expertise and judgment they respect. Submission to Bahá'í review is no greater a requirement, and may well be less demanding in most cases, than the rigorous review of scientific papers before their publication. In the same way that scientists have acceded to the discipline of review in the interest of ensuring the precision and integrity of their dissertations, Bahá'í authors respect the function of review in the Bahá'í community.

The Bahá'í Faith makes very serious claims and has a rich and complex history, but it is as yet a young religion whose precepts are not widely understood. It has been undergoing severe persecution in the land of its birth and is experiencing serious opposition in other places where its detractors have no compunction in misrepresenting its purposes. Until its history, teachings and practices are well known throughout the world, it will be necessary for the Bahá'í community to make efforts within itself to present correct information about the Faith in books, films or other media. This can and must be done without violating the principle of freedom of expression, which, according to the teachings of the Faith, is a vital right of all persons.

It is not necessary for Bahá'í authors to make an issue of the function of review with others with whom they wish to collaborate, because it is not required of non-Bahá'ís, though they can, if they wish, call upon Bahá'í reviewing facilities when dealing with Bahá'í topics. Although the function of review in the Bahá'í community is concerned with checking an author's exposition of the Faith and its teachings, this function is not to be confused with evaluation of the literary merit of a work or of its value as a publication, which are normally the prerogative of the publisher. With or without review, the work presented by a Bahá'í to a non-Bahá'í collaborator will, it is presumed, be judged by that collaborator on its merits.

The House of Justice hopes that these points will clarify your thoughts on the function of review in the Bahá'í community.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat



Comments

Baha'i History - September 25. On this date in 1933, Shoghi Effendi wrote, "Without the assistance of God, as given through the message of Bahá'u'lláh, peace can never be safely and adequately established. To disregard the Bahá'í solution for world peace is to build on foundations of sand."

submitted12 days ago by A35821363

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[1422. To Disregard the Bahá'í Solution for Peace is to Build on Foundations of Sand](#)

"...He is firmly convinced that through perseverance and concerted action the cause of Peace will eventually triumph over all the dark forces which threaten the welfare and progress of the world to-day. But such purely human attempts are undoubtedly ineffective unless inspired and guided by the power of faith. **Without the assistance of God, as given through the message of Bahá'u'lláh, peace can never be safely and adequately established. To disregard the Bahá'í solution for world peace is to build on foundations of sand.** To accept and apply it is to make peace not a mere dream, or an ideal, but a living reality. This is the point which the Guardian wishes you to develop, to emphasize again and again, and to support by convincing arguments. The Bahá'í peace program is, indeed, not only one way of attaining that goal. It is not even relatively the best. It is, in the last resort, the sole effective instrument for the establishment of the reign of peace in this world. This attitude does not involve any total repudiation of other solutions offered by

various philanthropists. It merely shows their inadequacy compared to the Divine Plan for the unification of the world. We cannot escape the truth that nothing mundane can in the last resort be enduring, unless supported and sustained through the power of God."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, September 25, 1933: Ibid.)



Comments

Baha'i History - September 25. On this date in 2011, the NSA of the US was "pleased to announce the launching of a new nationwide initiative aimed at furthering the defense of Iran's Bahá'ís, with a particular focus on the embattled Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education."

submitted 12 days ago by A35821363

September 25. On this date in 2011, the NSA of the US was "[pleased to announce](#) the launching of a new nationwide initiative aimed at furthering the defense of Iran's Bahá'ís, with a particular focus on the embattled [Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education](#)."

[September 25, 2011](#)

To the American Bahá'í community

Dearly loved Friends,

The National Spiritual Assembly is pleased to announce the launching of a new nationwide initiative aimed at furthering the defense of Iran's Bahá'ís, with a particular focus on the embattled [Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education](#).

Entitled "[Education Under Fire](#)," the initiative will include a striking 30-minute documentary to be copresented with Amnesty International; an open letter to the international academic community coauthored by Nobel Peace Prize laureates Jose Ramos Horta, President of East Timor, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu; and a campaign to take—to campuses and communities across the country—a series of meetings combining a screening of the documentary with conversation.

The well-known online journal The Huffington Post will feature [a front-page story on the initiative and "exclusive release" of the Nobel laureates' open letter on Monday, September 26](#). The letter will then reside—together with various supplementary campaign materials—on a website of its own (at www.educationunderfire.com). A premiere screening of the documentary at Columbia University in New York has been scheduled for late October, with major screenings to follow in Boston, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Additional screenings of the documentary across the country will be organized thereafter; meanwhile, both a trailer for the film and other promotional tools are available on the website.

We ask that you share this news at the upcoming [Feast of Mashíyyat](#), and that the friends do all they can to bring [the article in The Huffington Post](#) and [the new website](www.educationunderfire.com) to the attention of their friends, neighbors, coworkers, and contacts. Let us once again show—to a superlative degree—our solidarity with our greatly wronged sisters and brothers in the Cradle of the Faith.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

[Kenneth E. Bowers](#)

Secretary

National Spiritual Assembly of the

Bahá'ís of the United States



Comments

September 25. On this date in 1934, Shoghi Effendi wrote German Bahá'ís that he had "the brightest hopes for the future expansion of the Faith not only in your two localities but throughout Germany as a whole."

submitted 12 days ago by A35821363

September 25. On this date in 1934, [a letter written](#) on behalf of Shoghi Effendi addressed to the Bahá'ís of Geislingen and Goppingen, stating that "he has gathered a very good impression about the conditions of the Cause in your centre" and that he had "the brightest hopes for the future expansion of the Faith not only in your two localities but throughout Germany as a whole."

On February 11, 1934, Shoghi Effendi [addressed a letter to a German Bahá'í](#) stating about the [Nazi government](#) that "obedience to the regulations and orders of the state is indeed, the sacred obligation of every true and loyal Bahá'í" and that "our German friends are under the sacred obligation to whole-heartedly obey the [existing political regime](#), whatever be their personal views and criticisms of its actual working. There is nothing more contrary to the spirit of the Cause than open rebellion against the governmental authorities of a country, specially if they do not interfere in and do not oppose the inner and sacred beliefs and religious convictions of the individual. And there is every reason to believe that the [present regime in Germany](#), which has thus far refused to trample upon the domain of individual conscience in all matters pertaining to religion will never encroach upon it in the near future, unless some unforeseen and unexpected changes take place. And this seems to be doubtful at present."

[25 September 1934](#) [The Bahá'ís of Geislingen and Goppingen]

Dear Friends and co-workers,

On behalf of the Guardian I wish to acknowledge the receipt of your deeply appreciated message of August 19th written through the care of dear Mr. Schultheiss, and to thank you for it, as well as for the beautiful photographs which you have been most kind in sending to him. From them all he has gathered **a very good impression about the conditions of the Cause in your centre**, and was much encouraged to witness the beautiful spirit of fellowship and of service which is animating your group. He cherishes, indeed, **the brightest hopes for the future expansion of the Faith not only in your two localities but throughout Germany as a whole**. He is ardently praying that the beloved Master's promises to that effect may gradually and by means of your painstaking and continued labours be completely realized. In the meanwhile he wishes you to persevere in your efforts for the study and the spread of the Teachings, and to confidently and quietly toil for the future establishment of Bahá'u'lláh's world order in your country.

His prayers on behalf of each and every one of you will be continually offered to God, that through His guidance and love you may individually and collectively make a steady advancement in His Cause.

With hearty greetings and good wishes to you all,

In the Guardian's own handwriting: Dearly-beloved co-workers:

I was so pleased to receive your most welcome message. Any letter bearing such evidences of exemplary devotion to the Cause of God is a source of immense joy to my heart. I will most assuredly pray for you all and cherish the brightest hopes for your future contribution to the spread of our glorious Faith. Persevere and never feel depressed or discouraged. May the Almighty enable you to mirror forth the glory and splendour of this stupendous Revelation.

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi

On February 11, 1934, Shoghi Effendi [addressed a letter to a German Bahá'í](#) stating about the [Nazi government](#) that "obedience to the regulations and orders of the state is indeed, the sacred obligation of every true and loyal Bahá'í" and that "our German friends are under the sacred obligation to whole-heartedly obey the [existing political regime](#), whatever be their personal views and criticisms of its actual working. There is nothing more contrary to the spirit of the Cause than open rebellion against the governmental authorities of a country, specially if they do not interfere in and do not oppose the inner

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11 February 1934

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

I am charged by the Guardian to thank you for your letter of Jan. 30th as well as for the enclosed pamphlet containing the address delivered by [Herr Hitler](#) on [Oct. 14th, 1933](#), on the subject of Germany's attitude towards peace, all of which he read with deepest care and sustained interest. He wishes me to convey to you and to all the members of your German National Assembly and through them to all the followers of the [Faith in Germany](#) his views on the [present conditions in that land](#), and particularly in their relation to the nature and scope of the Bahá'í activities of our German believers.

At the outset it should be made indubitably clear that the Bahá'í Cause being essentially a religious movement of a spiritual character stands above every political party or group, and thus cannot and should not act in contravention to the principles, laws, and doctrines of any government. **Obedience to the regulations and orders of the state is indeed, the sacred obligation of every true and loyal Bahá'í.** Both Bahá'u'lláh and `Abdu'l-Bahá have urged us all to be submissive and loyal to the political authorities of our respective countries. It follows, therefore, that **our German friends are under the sacred obligation to whole-heartedly obey the existing [political regime](#), whatever be their personal views and criticisms of its actual working. There is nothing more contrary to the spirit of the Cause than open rebellion against the governmental authorities of a country, specially if they do not interfere in and do not oppose the inner and sacred beliefs and religious convictions of the individual. And there is every reason to believe that the present [regime in Germany](#) which has thus far refused to trample upon the domain of individual conscience in all matters pertaining to religion will never encroach upon it in the near future, unless some unforeseen and unexpected changes take place. And this seems to be doubtful at present.**

For whereas the friends should obey the government under which they live, even at the risk of sacrificing all their administrative affairs and interests, they should under no circumstances suffer their inner religious beliefs and convictions to be violated and transgressed by any authority whatever. **A distinction of a fundamental importance**

must, therefore, be made between spiritual and administrative matters. Whereas the former are sacred and inviolable, and hence cannot be subject to compromise, the latter are secondary and can consequently be given up and even sacrificed for the sake of obedience to the laws and regulations of the government. Obedience to the state is so vital a principle of the Cause that should the authorities in Germany decide to-day to prevent the Bahá'ís from holding any meeting or publishing any literature they should obey and be as submissive as our Russian believers have thus far been under the Soviet regime. But, as already pointed out, such an allegiance is confined merely to administrative matters which if checked can only retard the progress of the Faith for some time. In matters of belief, however, no compromise whatever should be allowed, even though the outcome of it be death or expulsion

There is one more point to be emphasized in this connection. The principle of obedience to government does not place any Bahá'í under the obligation of identifying the teachings of his Faith with the political program enforced by the government. For such an identification, besides being erroneous and contrary to both the spirit as well as the form of the Bahá'í message, would necessarily create a conflict within the conscience of every loyal believer.

For reasons which are only too obvious the Bahá'í philosophy of social and political organization cannot be fully reconciled with the political doctrines and conceptions that are current and much in vogue to-day. The wave of nationalism, so aggressive and so contagious in its effects, which has swept not only over Europe but over a large part of mankind is, indeed, the very negation of the gospel of peace and of brotherhood proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh. The actual trend in the political world is, indeed, far from being in the direction of the Bahá'í teachings. The world is drawing nearer and nearer to a universal catastrophe which will mark the end of a bankrupt and of a fundamentally defective civilization.

From such considerations we can well conclude that we as Bahá'ís can in no wise identify the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh with man-made creeds and conceptions, which by their very nature are impotent to save the world from the dangers with which it is being so fiercely and so increasingly assailed.

The Guardian hopes that these brief explanations will be sufficient to guide our German National Assembly in their efforts to safeguard and promote the interests of the Faith, and that through them they will be given a new vision of the Cause and a fresh determination to carry forward its message to the world at large.

With greetings and best wishes to you and to all the friends in Germany,...

In the Guardian's own handwriting: Dear and valued co-worker:

I wish to add a few words in loving appreciation of your strenuous, your intelligent and devoted efforts for the spread and consolidation of our beloved Faith. May the Almighty bless your endeavours, deepen your understanding of the essentials and requirements of our beloved Cause, and enable you in these difficult and challenging days to promote its interests and consolidate its institutions,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Comments

September 25. On this date in 1936, Shoghi Effendi wrote an introduction to the National Spiritual Assembly of India for Siegfried Schopflocher. Raised an Orthodox Jew in Germany, he later emigrated to Canada and was the primary financier of many projects, including the Temple in Wilmette.

submitted12 days agobyA35821363

September 25. On this date in 1936, Shoghi Effendi wrote an introduction to the National Spiritual Assembly of India for [Siegfried Schopflocher](#). The youngest of 18 children, he was raised an Orthodox Jew in Germany, and later became a Bahá'í at [Green Acre](#) after having emigrated to Canada. A 1936 letter by Shoghi Effendi states that "it was mainly due to his unfailing and most generous assistance that the Temple in Wilmette was built." On February 29, 1952, Shoghi Effendi named him a Hand of the Cause of God.

[Here](#) is an article about [Siegfried Schopflocher](#) from the Bahá'í Encyclopedia Project.

On September 25, 1936, Shoghi Effendi wrote the following [introduction](#) to the National Spiritual Assembly of India...

[Visit of Mr. Schopflocher to India](#)

I am addressing you these few lines on behalf of our beloved Guardian to ask you to kindly inform your fellow-members in the Indian N.S.A. of the happy news of the projected visit of dear [Mr. Siegfried Schopflocher](#) to India, and to request you to take any step that your Assembly deems advisable in order to make his journey as fruitful and abundant in its results as possible.

[Mr. Siegfried Schopflocher](#) is not in need of any introduction, as his long and manifold services to the Cause in America and particularly his generous and unfailing support of the local, national as well as international Baha'i funds, have endeared him to all the friends, whether in the East or in the West.

For many years he has been a member of the American N.S.A. and he contributed no small part in the steady development and consolidation of the Administration ever since the early days of its establishment in the States. He is indeed an outstanding champion of the Administration not only in America but also in the West, and has proved in deeds his profound attachment and loyalty to all its principles, laws and institutions.

His name will be ever associated with the beloved Temple in Wilmette. Had it not been for the continued and whole-hearted support, both financial and moral, which he so generously extended to it, that edifice could have never been reared so steadily and efficiently. The friends will always remember with deep gratitude the eminent services he has rendered the Faith in this connection.

In view of these labours so devotedly accomplished, the Guardian wishes your Assembly to urge the friends to draw full benefit from [Mr. Schopflocher](#)'s visit to India. He is confident that you will extend to him a most hearty welcome, and will, through association with him, draw fresh strength and inspiration in your arduous labours for the Cause.

September 25, 1936



Comments

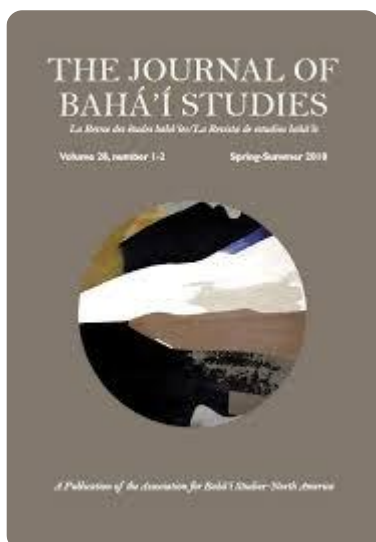
September 25. On this date in 1942, Shoghi Effendi wrote "There is an answer in the teachings for everything; unfortunately the majority of the Bahá'ís, however intensely devoted and sincere they may be, lack for the most part the necessary scholarship and wisdom to reply to and refute the ..."

submitted12 days ago by A35821363

September 25. On this date in 1942, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#) "There is an answer in the teachings for everything; unfortunately the majority of the Bahá'ís, however intensely devoted and sincere they may be, lack for the most part the necessary scholarship and wisdom to reply to and refute the claims and attacks of people with some education and standing."

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From a letter on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, dated 25 September 1942, cited in *Unfolding Destiny* 439. [14]



Comments

September 25. On this date in 1973, the UHJ wrote "A name should be removed only when the person clearly states that he no longer believes in Bahá'u'lláh and wishes his name to be removed from Bahá'í membership. If the believer's whereabouts are unknown, his name should still not be removed..."

submitted 12 days ago by A35821363

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[296. Inactive Believers--Names Removed Only When Clearly Stated No Longer Believe in Bahá'u'lláh](#)

"Further guidance might be welcome and we share portions of a letter written by the Universal House of Justice to another National Spiritual Assembly on 4 September 1966: '...Whilst it is embarrassing to leave names of inactive believers on a membership list, inactivity and lack of attendance at Bahá'í meetings are not the bases for removing names of believers from the membership roster. **A name should be removed only when the person clearly states that he no longer believes in Bahá'u'lláh and wishes his name to be removed from Bahá'í membership.** If the believer's whereabouts are unknown, his name should still not be removed from membership, but kept in a special list of believers whose addresses are unknown, and who obviously are not counted in determining the allocation of delegates.'"

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of Malaysia, September 25, 1973: Malaysian Bahá'í News, Vol. 9, Nos. 2 3, June/November 1973)



Comments

September 25. On this date in 1999, David Kelly converted to the Bahá'í Faith at the Bosch Bahá'í School in California. David Kelly was a prime source for the false information of Iraq's purported possession of weapons of mass destruction in the lead-up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

submitted12 days agobyA35821363

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On August 11, 2003, the Independent carried [an article](#) about David Kelly, noting "In October 2002, [Dr Kelly](#) gave a slide show and lecture about his experiences as a weapons inspector in Iraq to a small almost private gathering of the Baha'i faith, which aims to unite the teachings of all the prophets. [Dr Kelly](#) had converted to the religion three years earlier, while in New York on attachment to the UN. When he returned to England he became treasurer of the small but influential Baha'i branch in Abingdon near his home. [Roger Kingdon](#), a member, recalls: 'He had no doubt that [the Iraqis] had biological and chemical weapons. It was clear that David Kelly was largely happy with the material in the dossier.'"

On July 17, 2003, [David Kelly](#) was found dead from an apparent suicide, two days after appearing before a parliamentary [Foreign Affairs Select Committee](#). An authority on biological warfare employed by the British Ministry of Defence, and formerly a weapons inspector with the [United Nations Special Commission](#) in Iraq, David Kelly was a prime

source for the false information of Iraq's purported possession of weapons of mass destruction in the lead-up to the [invasion of Iraq in 2003](#).

From [The Times](#) article titled "[Faith, peace and tolerance in Monterey](#)", dated September 3, 2003.

September 3

[Faith, peace and tolerance in Monterey](#)

By Chris Ayres and James Bone

Four years ago David Kelly made a personal odyssey to the Californian resort of Monterey. He was there, not to visit its military installations or its tourist boutiques but to convert to the Baha'i faith

IT WOULD SEEM an unlikely place to find peace for the soul. Monterey, an affluent city on California's central coast, about an hour's flight north from Los Angeles, is known more for its proximity to military installations and its role as retirement city of choice for generals and one-time spies than for any sense of spirituality. But it was to this beautiful seaside resort, often shrouded in mist because of the hot air from the Californian deserts hitting the cold Pacific, that David Kelly came four years ago to make a declaration of faith to the Baha'i religion.

On September 25, 1999, he would have turned his back on the postcard landscape of sand dunes and gleaming ocean that marks California's Pacific Coast Highway, and taken the incongruously named Bonny Doon Road up through the towns of Loch Lomond and Bracken Brae, until he came to the first signpost to the Bosch Baha'i School, one of only four such establishments in the United States and an inspiration for the British scientist and biological weapons expert. He was possibly accompanied by his friend and spiritual mentor Mai Pederson, the American woman thought to be responsible for introducing him to the Baha'i faith.

Monterey, with its proximity to the Defence Language Institute and other military installations, was a natural destination for Dr Kelly; the Monterey Institute of International Studies, which has its own Centre for Nonproliferation Studies, the largest non-governmental organisation in the world devoted to curbing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, would have been an essential place for him to visit. The centre is thought to have one of the largest databases of information on Saddam Hussein's regime in the world. The city itself, an old fishing town turned into a tourist mecca, with chi-chi boutiques and restaur-

ants that line the seafront — a kind of Covent Garden-on-sea — is similar to other California coastal towns such as Carmel and Santa Barbara that look out over the rolling surf of the Pacific. But it is thought that Dr Kelly visited Monterey not for the expertise offered by the city's scientists, but for the consolation of the soul that he would find in the Baha'i school high above the city, overlooking the California coastline.

After reaching the series of wooden cabins that make up the school's campus — passing, first, the four garden gnomes, dressed in 19th-century peasant outfits, that wave cheerfully to those curious or devoted enough to go further — he made his simple declaration of faith. According to Joanne McClure, a youthful 66-year-old who pays \$65 (£41) a night for room and board at the school, to an untrained eye this would have seemed an almost casual affair, the kind of non-ritual ritual beloved of the Baha'is, who pride themselves on having no formal initiation ceremony, sacrament or clergy. "First we would make sure initiates know who Baha'ullah is — the founder of the faith — and that they really knew what they were doing," says McClure. "Then they would sign a card saying that there are certain laws they need to obey." These include abstaining from drink, drugs and gambling; supporting the institution of marriage; believing that God created the universe; and encouraging the end of racial, class, and religious prejudices. After Dr Kelly had signed the card, it would have been sent to the Baha'i national headquarters in Wilmette, Illinois, where the new believer would be put on the mailing list for the American magazine *The Baha'is*. From then on, Dr Kelly would have been encouraged to attend feasts held every 19 days, which involve prayer-chants, administrative discussions with local spiritual assemblies, and general socialising.

Dr Kelly would have been attracted to the peacefulness and tolerance of the Baha'is, who believe that all religions are essentially valid. As McClure says: "I could never understand why God was going to send all these people to Hell just because they didn't believe in the same things." As a scientist, perhaps seeking spiritual succour within an intellectual framework, he would also have been attracted to the faith's openness to modernity and its lack of fundamentalist dogma.

Throughout 1999 Dr Kelly travelled to New York for six or seven two-week trips to work with fellow experts at UN headquarters, and he visited at least twice more for the regular six-monthly meetings of the UN Special Commission's (UNSCOM's) college of commissioners. During this year, he often appeared at Baha'i meetings on the other side of the continent in Monterey, at the group's traditional 19th-day feasts. Pederson, who was studying at the Defence Language Institute, a heavily guarded military facility that taught American soldiers how to speak Japanese during the Second World War, was also at the

feasts. The two had met and become friends when she served under the scientist on a UN mission to Iraq in 1998, the last inspection before the withdrawal of UN inspectors.

John VonBerg, whose wife was the secretary of the local Baha'is' spiritual assembly at the time, says: "He has been to my home several times. We had special events on holy days, representing various things. His principles were so close to those of the Baha'i faith."

The last time Dr Kelly visited, VonBerg remembers the Baha'i group going to gaze out over the bay.

Noreen Steinmetz, a friend of Dr Kelly and Pederson, recalls: "He would pass through here every once in a while and we would have the opportunity to sit down with him and go on hikes and chat. I met him through Mai Pederson." She adds that Dr Kelly always arrived at meetings by himself, and other Baha'is assumed that he was working at the nearby Monterey Institute, where several of his UN colleagues worked. But scientist friends at the centre say he never visited them there.

A glance around the Bosch Baha'i School's bookshop reveals some possible sources of tension for Dr Kelly. Several tomes focus on the divine importance of the UN, which was eventually ignored by the United States and Britain after it refused to support a military campaign to remove the Iraqi regime.

With that in mind, it is hard to see how Dr Kelly could ever have supported an Iraq war without UN approval.

Even more ominous, however, is a tract entitled Political Non-Involvement and Obedience to Government, compiled by Peter J. Khan. The book spells out the Baha'is' belief that they should not become involved in any form of politics, because politics can create divisions that could destroy the Baha'i community.

As part of this argument, Baha'is believe that they should support their government, whether just or unjust (there are, however, exceptions). On page 28, Khan poses a question that Dr Kelly himself could have asked: What should we do when controversies arise as a result of government policies?

The answer, provided by the Guardian of the Baha'i faith, the late Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, is this: "In such controversies they should assign no blame, take no side, further no design, and identify themselves with no system prejudicial to the best interests of that worldwide fellowship which it is their aim to guard and foster."

Khan's book makes it clear that any Baha'i who does not follow this advice is ultimately weakening the Baha'i religion. Given this official position from the Guardian, it is not hard to imagine Dr Kelly's horror when he was named as the alleged source of a story blaming Britain's decision to go to war on a press secretary who "sexed up" intelligence reports.

But would the Guardian have condoned suicide? "Let's just say," says Mrs VonBerg, "that it would not follow the teachings of the Baha'i faith."



Comments

[–]TheDrySubstance1 point2 points3 points11 days ago(0 children)

The text is misleading. David Kelly was an authority on biological warfare, employed by UK ministry of defence and formerly a United Nations weapons inspector. He was the whistle blower who reported that Iraq did not have the weapons reported by the USA as a precursor for the war. George Bush and Tony Blair ignored his findings, went to war and David Kelly was later found 'suicided'.

[–]nopeitsadog0 points1 point2 points8 days ago(0 children)

Suicide by sniper no doubt.

September 25. On this date in 2009, Kathryn Alio died. An early American Bahá'í who pioneered to Alaska, Lesotho and Iceland, she served on the National Spiritual Assembly of Alaska.

submitted12 days ago by A35821363

September 25. On this date in 2009, [Kathryn Alio](#) died. An early American Bahá'í who pioneered to Alaska, Lesotho and Iceland, she served on the National Spiritual Assembly of Alaska.

Kathryn Alio was born in Columbus Ohio on February 4, 1906 as the second of six children. She cared for her younger siblings as a child. At some point she moved to Dayton where she worked as a secretary at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

She became a Bahá'í while living in Dayton by 1940 and despite being an isolated Bahá'í she remained an active member of the community, attending an inter-city Teaching Conference in Springfield in 1946. By 1949 a Local Spiritual Assembly of Dayton had been established, and Kathryn served as its Secretary.

In 1954 she left Dayton, pioneering to Fairbanks in Alaska, and moving to Anchorage shortly after arriving. She was elected to the Alaskan National Spiritual Assembly shortly after it was established and served on it until 1963. She served as editor of Alaska Bahá'í News from 1962 to 1964. In 1967 she was a member of a Proclamation Committee in Anchorage, which aimed to teach the Faith on a wide scale.

Kathryn pioneered to Lesotho in the late 1960's and wrote a report on the first Lesotho National Convention in 1971. She moved from South Africa to Iceland, and returned to Alaska during the 1970's where she worked at a department store in her old age.

In 2005 she moved to Waltham Crossings, where she lived with her sister Phyllis.

She died on September 25, 2009, at the age of 103.



Comments

September 25. On this date in 2020, Farzam Arbab, former member of the UHJ from 1993 to 2013, died in San Diego, California. Farzam Arbab was the brother-in-law of Gustavo Correa, who was a UHJ member from 2008 to 2018. Several of the Arbabs and Correas lead various Bahá'í-affiliated NGOs.

submitted12 days ago by A35821363

September 25. On this date in 2020, [Farzam Arbab](#), former member of the Universal House of Justice from 1993 to 2013, [died](#) in San Diego, California. Farzam Arbab was the brother-in-law of [Gustavo Correa](#), who was a UHJ member from 2008 to 2018. Several of the Arbabs and Correas lead various Bahá'í-affiliated NGOs and organizations.

Born in Tehran, Iran on October 27, 1941, **Farzam Arbab** would go on to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree from Amherst College in 1964 and a Doctor of Philosophy in physics from the University of California, Berkeley in 1968. Shortly after earning his doctorate, Arbab moved to Colombia where he quickly established himself in the leadership in the Bahá'í community of that country and by 1970 was Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly. While in Colombia he helped found [Foundation for the Application and Teaching of the Sciences \(FUNDAEC\)](#).

Initially elected in 1993 to the [Universal House of Justice](#), the supreme governing body of the Bahá'í Faith, Farzam Arbab retired from that body in 2013. Before his election to the Universal House of Justice, in 1988, he was appointed to the [International Teaching Centre](#). The International Teaching Centre, whose seat is at the [Bahá'í World Centre](#) in Haifa, Israel, is composed of nine [Counsellors](#) appointed by the Universal House of Justice and tasked with duties to stimulate and coordinate the [Continental Board of Counselors](#) and assist the

Universal House of Justice in matters relating to the teaching and protection of the faith. All of the current members of the Universal House of Justice previously served as members of the International Teaching Centre. In 1980 he was appointed to the [Continental Board of Counsellors for the Protection and Propagation of the Faith in the Americas](#), on which he served for eight years. From 1970 until 1980 he served as the Chairman for the [National Spiritual Assembly](#) of the [Bahá'ís of Colombia](#). In 1980, while still a Counsellor, Arbab was on the initial board of directors for the [Anís Zunúzí Bahá'í School](#) in Haiti.

Farzam Arbab's son, **Paul Arbab**, is administrator at the Luxembourg-based [Unity Foundation](#), which works with [Luxembourg's Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)) and "a network of local development agencies assisting them in their efforts to build capacity amongst populations to take charge of their own social and economic development." "Born in the US, Paul grew up in Colombia. He holds an MBA and joined the board of Unity Foundation in January 2007. Since then he has been able to provide valuable input to the strategic direction of the Foundation. He is a proud father of two toddlers and strongly believes in the power of education." Unity Foundation is "governed by a board of directors which regularly meets to consult on the strategic direction of the organization. The day-to-day work is being carried out by the office team. Our external consultancy body, the [Office of Social and Economic Development \(OSED\)](#) in Haifa, Israel connects us to grass-root development agencies which have the capacity to work with external funding organization. OSED and the [Luxembourg] Ministry of Foreign Affairs act as two filters ensuring the quality and integrity of our projects."

Farzam Arbab's sister, **Haleh Arbab**, is currently director of the [Institute for Studies in Global Prosperity](#), a non-profit educational and research organization "dedicated to building capacity in individuals, groups and institutions to contribute to prevalent discourses concerned with the betterment of society" through "working in collaboration with the [Bahá'í International Community](#)." Born in Iran and educated in the United States, Haleh Arbab previously lived in Colombia from 1982 to 2005 where she worked with the [Foundation for the Application and Teaching of the Sciences \(FUNDAEC\)](#) and served as Rector of Centro Universitario de Bienestar Rural, a Colombian Bahá'í-inspired institute she helped found in 1988.

Farzam Arbab's brother-in-law, Haleh Arbab's husband, is **Gustavo Correa** who himself has been a member of the Universal House of Justice since 2008. Before his election to the Universal House of Justice, in 2005, Correa was appointed to the International Teaching Centre. Along with his brother-in-law, Farzam Arbab, Gustavo Correa was one of the

founders of FUNDAEC and later served as its Director, the position currently held by his daughter, Bitá Correa.

Farzam Arab's niece, **Bitá Correa**, is a graduate of Bryn Mawr College. Aside from being FUNDAEC's current program director, Bitá Correa participated as a member of the [Bahá'í International Community's](#) delegation to the 55th United Nations [Commission for Social Development](#). A recent graduate of Bryn Mawr College, Bitá Correa is the daughter of Haleh Arbab, Farzam Arbab's sister, and Gustavo Correa.

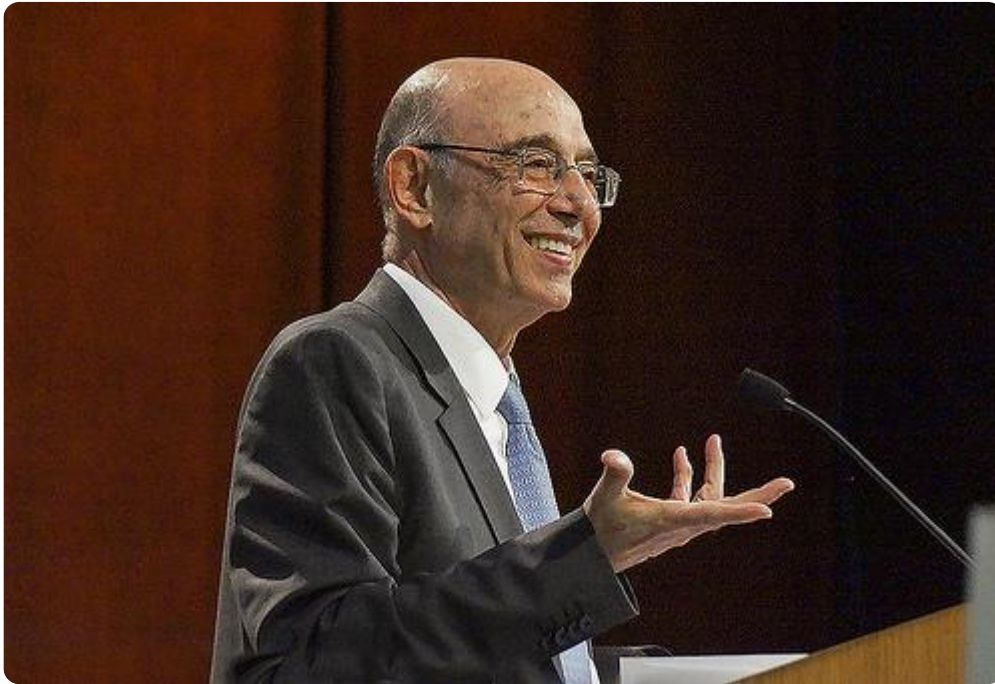
Farzam Arbab was one of the founders of [FUNDAEC \(Foundation for the Application and Teaching of the Sciences\)](#). He served as its Director from 1974 through 1988 and continues to serve on its board. FUNDAEC was established in 1974 by a group of professors at the [University of Valle](#) in Colombia who were looking for new strategies to develop the capacities of people and to generate knowledge in isolated regions of the country. In 2002, the [Club of Budapest](#) recognized FUNDAEC's new rural education model. The model, known as SAT (for "Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial, Spanish for "System for Tutorial Learning") started in 1980 and centers on the use of interactive workbooks facilitated by a tutor. In Colombia, these tutors are trained at the Center for Rural Education.

The SAT techniques Arbab helped develop at FUNDAEC have been applied to the Bahá'í community in the form of the [Ruhi Institute](#), which was named after Arbab's father. Centered on [Bahá'í study circles](#), the goal of the [Ruhi Institute](#) courses is to "evoke a transformative learning experience through a learner-centered, experiential, and collaborative approach facilitated by a tutor rather than an instructor, a teacher, or an expert." Among the principles of the [Ruhi curriculum](#) is the utilization of service projects to implement learning into tangible action.

The Universal House of Justice has encouraged the emulation of the Ruhi model throughout the global Bahá'í community. According to one researcher, the [Ruhi Institute's](#) method has resulted in "nonhierarchical, self-initiated, self-organized small groups engaged in study, teaching, and action" and is "becoming the core of Bahá'í community life worldwide as the outcome of a process that has sought to nurture the spiritual life of individuals and families and to establish social foundations for the vision and practice of religious world citizenship." [Paul Lample](#), another member of the Universal House of Justice, has stated "Doubtless the institute and its curriculum will continue to evolve, both in content and form, to a level of greater complexity in regions and nations within the framework of the administrative order throughout the various stages of the [Divine Plan](#) in the second century of the [Formative Age](#)."

For a number of years now, [Unity Foundation has collaborated with FUNDAEC](#) and "since June 2013, Unity Foundation has renewed its collaboration with FUNDAEC."

On September 25, 2020, Farzam Arbab died in San Diego, California.



Comments

Baha'i History - September 26. On this date in 1877, Siegfried Schopflocher, a Hand of the Cause of God, was born. The youngest of 18 children, he was raised an Orthodox Jew in Germany. He later emigrated to Canada and was the primary financier of many projects, including the Temple in Wilmette.

submitted 11 days ago by A35821363

September 26. On this date in 1877, [Siegfried Schopflocher](#), a Hand of the Cause of God, was born. The youngest of 18 children, he was raised an Orthodox Jew in Germany, and later became a Bahá'í at [Green Acre](#) after having emigrated to Canada. A 1936 letter by Shoghi Effendi states that "it was mainly due to his unfailing and most generous assistance that the Temple in Wilmette was built."

[Here](#) is an article about [Siegfried Schopflocher](#) from the Bahá'í Encyclopedia Project.

On September 25, 1936, Shoghi Effendi wrote the following [introduction](#) to the National Spiritual Assembly of India...

[Visit of Mr. Schopflocher to India](#)

I am addressing you these few lines on behalf of our beloved Guardian to ask you to kindly inform your fellow-members in the Indian N.S.A. of the happy news of the projected visit of dear [Mr. Siegfried Schopflocher](#) to India, and to request you to take any step that your Assembly deems advisable in order to make his journey as fruitful and abundant in its results as possible.

[Mr. Siegfried Schopflocher](#) is not in need of any introduction, as his long and manifold services to the Cause in America and particularly his generous and unfailing support of the local, national as well as international Baha'i funds, have endeared him to all the friends, whether in the East or in the West.

For many years he has been a member of the American N.S.A. and he contributed no small part in the steady development and consolidation of the Administration ever since the early days of its establishment in the States. He is indeed an outstanding champion of the Administration not only in America but also in the West, and has proved in deeds his profound attachment and loyalty to all its principles, laws and institutions.

His name will be ever associated with the beloved Temple in Wilmette. Had it not been for the continued and whole-hearted support, both financial and moral, which he so generously extended to it, that edifice could have never been reared so steadily and efficiently. The friends will always remember with deep gratitude the eminent services he has rendered the Faith in this connection.

In view of these labours so devotedly accomplished, the Guardian wishes your Assembly to urge the friends to draw full benefit from [Mr. Schopflocher](#)'s visit to India. He is confident that you will extend to him a most hearty welcome, and will, through association with him, draw fresh strength and inspiration in your arduous labours for the Cause.

September 25, 1936



Comments

Baha'i History - September 26. On this date in 1957, Shoghi Effendi wrote "we cannot accept as believers those who are openly" engaged in "companionate marriage."

submitted 11 days ago by A35821363

September 26. On this date in 1957, Shoghi Effendi wrote "we cannot accept as believers those who are openly" engaged in "[companionate marriage](#)."

[1275. Companionate Marriage and Flagrantly Immoral Relationships](#)

"Regarding [companionate marriage](#) and flagrant immorality, we quote below two passages from letters written on behalf of the Guardian:

'The Guardian has instructed me to say that [companionate marriage](#), where there is no legal or religious marriage, is an immoral relationship and we cannot accept as believers those who are openly behaving in this way.' (To the NSA of Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, dated September 26, 1957)

'As regards flagrantly immoral relationships, such as a man living with a mistress, this should be brought to his attention in a loving manner, and he should be urged to either marry the woman if he is free to do so, or to give up this conduct, so detrimental to the Faith and to his own spiritual progress.'" (To the NSA of Central America, dated February 9, 1957)

(From a letter of the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of Paraguay, November 21, 1967)

THE C-M-
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presents



With

Betty Bronson & Alec B. Francis

Directed by ERLE C. KENTON



A First National Picture

Morgan

Comments

Baha'i History - September 26. On this date in 1957, Shoghi Effendi wrote, "Your Assembly should not remove the names of Bahá'ís from the voting list just because they do not attend meetings or just because their addresses are unknown. It is hard to make Bahá'ís..."

submitted 11 days ago by A35821363

September 26. On this date in 1957, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#), "Your Assembly should not remove the names of Bahá'ís from the voting list just because they do not attend meetings or just because their addresses are unknown. It is hard to make Bahá'ís; and you must try and help them and reactivate them, and find those whose addresses are unknown if you can."

[293. Voting List, Names Should Not Be Removed from](#)

"Your Assembly should not remove the names of Bahá'ís from the voting list just because they do not attend meetings or just because their addresses are unknown. It is hard to make Bahá'ís; and you must try and help them and reactivate them, and find those whose addresses are unknown if you can."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Guardian to the National Assembly of Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, September 26, 1957)

MEMBERSHIP CARD

This membership card does not constitute a Bahá'í credential when travelling

No. 747

23rd May

1956

Name David Meredydd Lewis,

Address 56 King George V -
Drive West, Cardiff,
Glamorgan.



John Ferraby
H. T. Balygi

Comments

Baha'i History - September 26. On this date in 1962, the Custodians wrote all Hands of the Cause of God about updated demographics and listed further individuals expelled for supporting Mason Remey's claim of being the Second Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith.

submitted 11 days ago by A35821363

September 26. On this date in 1962, the [Custodians](#) wrote all [Hands of the Cause of God](#) about updated demographics and listed further individuals expelled for supporting [Mason Remey's](#) claim of being the Second Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith.

To All Hands of the Cause of God

[September 26, 1962](#)

As our beloved Guardian's [Plan](#) speeds to an end, news of additional victories continues to brighten the closing months.

Plans for the World Convention and [World Congress](#) are progressing at an increased pace. The Hands of the Faith and the members of the [International Bahá'í Council are working more closely than ever during these golden days still remaining of our beloved Guardian's [World-Conquering Crusade](#).

India reports 34,000 believers, over 20,000 since Ridvan; Central and East Africa over 42,000. Borneo Island now has over 6,000 new believers since Ridvan, 3,000 in the past two months. There were 115 new believers among the San Blas Indians in Panama during the past month. One entire island of the San Blas group, named Islapino, has been conquered for the Faith, and four new Indian areas have been opened up there. The first Indian community in Argentina has been enrolled in the Faith across the border from Bolivia. The

first all-Indian Local Assembly of Brazil was established in Logoa Grande. In England they have enrolled over 120 new believers since June, nearly as many as during the entire last year, which was a record year. This greatly increased effort is supported by no less than 100 fireside meetings each week.

Such victories have brought in their wake, as expected, increased attacks and opposition from the enemies. Two members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Chile, residing in Loncoche, Fabienne. Guillon and Sr. Pallés,¹ have become [Covenant-breakers](#), supporting the false claims of [Mason Remey](#). Both have been expelled. [Mr. and Mrs. James Barrett](#) of Panama, daughter and son-in-law of Fabienne Guillon, have also been expelled from the Faith for similar reasons. It has been reported that the Local Spiritual Assembly of Loncoche is following Guillon and Pallés. [Faizi](#) and Board member [Mas'ud Khamsi](#) are in Loncoche, Chile now to make an investigation. We are awaiting their report, and shall keep you informed.

The [Remey](#) supporters are sending out a flood of correspondence, re-peating the same things over and over; this material includes a printed 52-page booklet by [Remey](#) which is a duplicate of all the things he said in 1960 and has been parroting since.

This brings you up to date on the activities of these [Covenant-breakers](#). If you have any additional items to report, or have evidence of any increased activity, or the presence or movement of any of these enemies, we would appreciate immediate and regular reports.

Both the National Spiritual Assembly of Colombia and of Belgium have received official status from their respective governments during the past months.

The reports from the summer schools around the world all speak of the new spirit of enthusiasm and dedication, and many speak of the astonishing number of enrolments which took place during the sessions.

We shall remember you in our prayers at the sacred Shrines.

With warmest Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

¹ The expulsion of Sr. Jorgé Pallés was based on information at hand. It was later clarified that he had not accepted [Mason Remey](#) and was therefore reinstated (see p. 376). That a

letter had been written by seven members of the Loncoche community in support of [Re-mey](#) was proved to be incorrect.



Comments

Baha'i History - September 26. On this date in 1969, the UHJ wrote, "The reports we have received on summer school sessions held in Europe this year indicate that some of them spend undue time on philosophic and esoteric subjects and insufficient emphasis on the Bahá'í Faith and its Teachings."

submitted 11 days ago by A35821363

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[1892. Undue Time Should Not Be Spent on Philosophic and Esoteric Subjects](#)

"The reports we have received on summer school sessions held in Europe this year indicate that some of them spend undue time on philosophic and esoteric subjects and insufficient emphasis on the [Bahá'í Faith](#) and its [Teachings](#)."

"The beloved Guardian stressed that one of the important purposes of [Bahá'í summer schools](#) is to deepen the knowledge of the believers in the history and Teachings of the Faith so that they can become better teachers. To this end he emphasized the study of Islam and the Qur'an so that the friends would have a background against which to study the [Bahá'í Writings](#), and he urged study of the principles of [Bahá'í Administration](#).

"In addition he stated that [summer schools](#) should become high occasions for teaching the Message. To an individual believer he wrote: 'Through daily association with the believers, non-Bahá'ís will come to see the Cause functioning as an active and living

community entirely dedicated to the service of what is best and highest in the world. The lectures will familiarize them with the principles underlying the [New World Order](#), while their participation in the social life of the believers will enable them to see the way in which these very same principles are put into operation.'

"It is requested that National Assemblies review [summer school](#) and winter school curricula in light of these important principles. At this time, when the prosecution of the [Nine Year Plan](#) to final victory is of supreme importance, it is also urged that during [summer school](#) sessions opportunities be provided to impress upon the believers the urgent need for pioneering and teaching.

"We pray that [summer schools](#) may become increasingly effective in educating the friends so that they in turn may become useful channels for the diffusion of the Divine fragrances."

(From a letter of the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies of Europe, September 26, 1969)



Comments

September 26. On this date in 1908, David Hofman, who served on the Universal House of Justice from 1963 until 1988 and before that on the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles for 27 years, was born.

submitted 11 days ago by A35821363

September 26. On this date in 1908, [David Hoffman](#), who served on the Universal House of Justice from 1963 until 1988 and before that on the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles for 27 years, was born.

[David Hoffman](#) was born on May 9, 1908 in Poona, India where his father served in the British Army. Educated in England, as a young man he set out to see the world. While in Canada during the 1930s, he encountered the Bahá'í Faith at the home of [May](#) and [William Sutherland Maxwell](#) in Montreal. He became a Bahá'í and continued his travels, living for a time in Hollywood, California, and appearing in a number of silent movies. Back in England he earned several acting roles in the West End of London and in 1937 became the world's only television announcer on the BBC's first television transmissions. His voice was also heard on the radio, on the BBC's Empire Service.

Following World War II he married former US Olympic athlete [Marion Holley](#), who predeceased him. They had two children. The Hofmans were very active members of the Bahá'í community, establishing Bahá'í communities in Northampton, Birmingham, Oxford, Cardiff, and Watford. Mr. Hofman served for 27 years as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles. To promote books of religious interest, including titles on the Bahá'í Faith, he established the publishing firm [George Ronald](#), whose first title was *[The Renewal of Civilization](#)*, a book he wrote as an introduction to the Bahá'í Faith. Years later he authored a biography of Hand of the Cause George Townshend.

[David Hoffman](#) was elected to the inaugural Universal House of Justice at the first International Convention in 1963 and served on that body for 25 years, until retiring in 1988. As a member of the Universal House of Justice, [David Hoffman](#) was instrumental in applying pressure on the academic [Denis MacEoin](#).

In 2003, [Juan Cole](#) described in [a message on the Talisman mail list](#) the pressure placed on [Denis MacEoin](#) by the [Bahá'í Administrative Order](#)...

Denis MacEoin did not withdraw from the faith, he was chased out by powerful Baha'i fundamentalists who were deeply threatened by the implications of his historical work. Denis became a Baha'i in North Ireland around 1965 and quickly emerged as a Baha'i youth leader. He was chosen to come to Haifa to commemorate the 1968 anniversary of Baha'u'llah's [Letters to the Kings](#).

He then wrote the House saying he did not know whether to serve the Faith by becoming an academic scholar of the Middle East or by going pioneering. They wrote back that either path would be praiseworthy. (They later stabbed him in the back about this). He therefore entered graduate school at Edinburgh in Middle East Studies, then went on to Cambridge University for his Ph.D. He was the first academic to study the Babi movement with all the tools of modern scholarship, and his findings were groundbreaking.

Denis made the mistake of continuing to be an active Baha'i. Since the community is so heavily dominated by aggressive fundamentalist fanatics, if a genuine academic wants to be a Baha'i s/he has to keep a low profile. Denis did not. He gave summer school talks. He was once viciously attacked by [Abu al-Qasim Faizi](#). His new ideas were upsetting the conservative British community. He objected when the Baha'i authorities supported dictators like [Pinochet](#) and [Bokassa](#). He corresponded with the Los Angeles Study Class and some of his letters were published in their newsletter (a newsletter that the Baha'i authorities later closed down, for all the world like Tehran ayatollahs pulling a publishing license).

Around 1980, fundamentalist UHJ members [Ian Semple](#) and [David Hoffman](#) called Denis to a meeting and told him he would have to fall silent (rather as the Vatican did to [Leonardo Boff](#)). [Hoffman](#) was especially harsh. Denis declined to fall silent, and ultimately withdrew from the Faith. He was pushed out by anti-intellectual bigots who had risen high in the Baha'i hierarchy and become Infallible. Denis's works on the Babi and Baha'i movements are some of the few pieces of solid scholarship that exist.

Instead of being grateful to him for sacrificing all those years living in penury as a graduate student, studying Arabic and Persian, traveling to a dangerous Middle East, all for

the service of Baha'u'llah, the community could think of nothing better to do than viciously attack him and throw him in the gutter of infamy.

Denis's story is the story of most thinking people who have anything serious to do with the Baha'i faith. Either they adopt a cult-like mindset of true believers and [covenant breakers](#), in which case they gradually cease being thinking persons, or they get chased out by the wild-eyed. A few people manage to avoid either fate by not drawing attention to themselves. The Baha'i Extreme Orthodox are like [the Borg](#) in [Star Trek](#). They want to assimilate you, but might leave you alone if you stay quiet.

cheers

Juan Cole

<https://www.juancole.com/>

Juan Cole would continue on subsequent posts...

He wasn't saying anything polemic. He was just discovering who the Babis really were from solid historical sources. The powerful Baha'is, who have all the open-mindedness of [Wahhabis](#), did not like it. It did not look like the fireside talks everyone grew up with, so they shoved Denis out of the community with threats of sanctions echoing about his ears.

cheers Juan

and later

Denis's works were mostly published in Middle East or Religion journals or as academic books, and most could be gotten on interlibrary loan. There may be some things at www.bahai-library.org, and there certainly is a bibliography there.

I apologize that I am off to a conference, so cannot go into depth but there are others here who can discuss Denis's findings.

As to why they should have angered anyone, I suppose you'd have to pass them by a Baha'i fundamentalist and they would tell you. You could just ask about [MacEoin](#) at e.g. soc.religion.bahai or about his ideas on Babis. Or at [beliefnet](#). I presume you will get an earful. One of them once more or less threatened to cut my head off with a sword, so they can be an irritable bunch.

cheers Juan



Comments

September 26. On this date in 1955, Shoghi Effendi wrote "Certainly if it is suppressed in one place, the power of the Cause is such that it must rise with greater strength in another place; and thus the persecutions of the Persian Bahá'ís have caused the Faith to surge ahead in Africa."

submitted 11 days ago by A35821363

September 26. On this date in 1955, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#) "The Faith is moving at a tremendous rate, and with tremendous force at the present time. Certainly if it is suppressed in one place, the power of the Cause is such that it must rise with greater strength in another place; and thus the persecutions of the Persian Bahá'ís have caused the Faith to surge ahead in Africa. This certainly must be a solace to the suffering of the Bahá'ís of Persia."

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(In a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 26 September 1955 to an individual believer)



Comments

September 26. On this date in 1976, the UHJ wrote conference participants in Nairobi noting "that in addition to Quddús the only other companion of the Báb on His pilgrimage to Mecca was an Ethiopian, and that he and his wife were intimately associated with Him and His household in Shiraz."

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September 26. On this date in 1976, the Universal House of Justice [addressed a letter](#) to the International Teaching Conference participants in Nairobi noting "that in addition to [Quddús](#) the [only other companion of the Báb on His pilgrimage to Mecca was an Ethiopian](#), and that he and his wife were intimately associated with Him and His household in Shiraz.

The Universal House of Justice

26 September 1976

To the Friends gathered at the International Conference in Nairobi

Beloved Friends,

The flames of enthusiasm which ignited the hearts of the followers and lovers of the Most Great Name in Helsinki, in Anchorage and in Paris are now being kindled in a city which occupies a central and envied position at the very crossroads of the vast African mainland and are destined to illumine its horizons. This Conference marking the imminent approach of the midway point of the [Five Year Plan](#) which coincides with the anniversary of the birth of the Blessed Báb, will no doubt go down in Bahá'í history as a further landmark in the

irresistible march of events which have characterized the impact of the Faith of God upon that continent.

We recall that in addition to [Quddús](#) the [only other companion of the Báb on His pilgrimage to Mecca was an Ethiopian](#), and that he and his wife were intimately associated with Him and His household in Shiraz. During the Ministry of Bahá'u'lláh a few of His stalwart disciples reached the northeastern shores of Africa, and under His direct guidance, announced the glad tidings of the New Day to the people of the Nile, thus opening to the Faith two countries of the African mainland. Soon afterwards, His blessed person approached those shores in the course of His exile to the Holy Land. Still later He voiced His significant utterance in which He compared the colored people to "the black pupil of the eye," through which "the light of the spirit shineth forth." Just over six years after His ascension, the [first member of the black race to embrace His Cause in the West](#), who was destined to become a disciple of 'Abdu'lBahá, a herald of the Kingdom, and the door through which numberless members of his race were to enter that Kingdom, came on pilgrimage to the Holy Land with the first group of Western friends who arrived in 'Akká to visit the Center of the Covenant. This was followed by a steady extension of the teaching work among the black people of North America, and the opening to the Faith, by the end of the [Heroic Age](#), of two more countries in Africa, under the watchful care of the Master, Whose three visits to Egypt have blessed the soil of that Continent. Prior to the conclusion of the first Bahá'í century the number of countries opened to the Faith had been raised to seven, and the teaching work among the black race in North America had entered a new phase of development through the continuous guidance flowing from the pen of Shoghi Effendi, who himself traversed the African continent twice from south to north, and who, in the course of his ministry, elevated two members of the black race to the rank of Hand of the Cause, appointed three more believers residing in Africa to that high office, and there raised up four National Spiritual Assemblies.

At the beginning of the [Ten Year Crusade](#) the number of countries opened to the Faith had reached twenty-four, including those opened under the aegis of the [Two Year African Campaign](#) coordinated by the British National Spiritual Assembly. The [Ten Year Plan](#) opened the rest of Africa to the light of God's Faith, and today we see with joy and pride in that vast continent and its neighboring islands the establishment of four [Boards of Counselors](#), thirty-four National Spiritual Assemblies—firm pillars of God's [Administrative Order](#)—and over 2800 Local Spiritual Assemblies, nuclei of a growing Bahá'í society.

Africa, a privileged continent with a past rich in cherished associations, has reached its present stage of growth through countless feats of heroism and dedication. Before us

unfolds the vision of the future. "Africa," the beloved Guardian assures us in one of the letters written on his behalf, "is truly awakening and finding herself, and she undoubtedly has a great message to give, and a great contribution to make to the advancement of world civilization. To the degree to which her peoples accept Bahá'u'lláh will they be blessed, strengthened and protected."

The realization of this glorious destiny requires that the immediate tasks be worthily discharged, and the pressing challenges and urgent requirements of the [Five Year Plan](#) be wholeheartedly and effectively met and satisfied. As the forces of darkness in that part of the world wax fiercer, and the problems facing its peoples and tribes become more critical, the believers in that continent must evince greater cohesion, scale loftier heights of heroism and self-sacrifice and demonstrate higher standards of concerted effort and harmonious development.

During the brief thirty months separating us from the end of the [Plan](#), Africa must once again distinguish itself among its sister continents through a vast increase in the number of its believers, its Local Spiritual Assemblies and its localities opened to the Faith, and by accelerating the process of entry by troops throughout its length and breadth. The deepening of the faith, of the understanding and of the spiritual life of its individual believers must gather greater momentum; the foundations of its existing Local Spiritual Assemblies must be more speedily consolidated; the number of local Hazíratu'l-Quds and of local endowments called for in the [Plan](#) must be soon acquired; the Bahá'í activities of women and of youth must be systematically stimulated; the Bahá'í education of the children of the believers must continuously be encouraged; the basis of the recognition that the institutions of the Faith have succeeded in obtaining from the authorities must steadily be broadened; mass communication facilities must be used far more frequently to teach and proclaim the Faith; and the publication and dissemination of the essential literature of the Faith must be given much greater importance. Above all it is imperative that in ever greater measure each individual believer should realize the vital need to subordinate his personal advantages to the overall welfare of the Cause, to awaken and reinforce his sense of responsibility before God to promote and protect its vital interests at all costs, and to renew his total consecration and dedication to His glorious Faith, so that, himself enkindled with the flames of its holy fire, he may, in concert with his fellow-believers, ignite the light of faith and certitude in the hearts of his family, his tribe, his countrymen and all the peoples of that mighty continent, in preparation for the day when Africa's major contribution to world civilization will become fully consummated.

We fervently pray at the Holy Shrines that these hopes and aspirations may soon come true, and that the “pure-hearted” and “spiritually receptive” people of Africa may draw ever nearer to the spirit of Bahá’u’lláh, and may become shining examples of self-abnegation, of courage and of love to the supporters of the Most Great Name in every land.

[signed: The Universal House of Justice]

On September 2, 1912, during his tour of North America, 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave a talk in the [Montreal home](#) of [William Sutherland Maxwell](#), (later named a Hand of the Cause by Shoghi Effendi in 1951) and [May Maxwell](#), the parents of Mary Maxwell, the future [Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum](#), wife of Shoghi Effendi. 'Abdu'l-Bahá presented his views on native cultures, Africans, indigenous North Americans and pre-Columbian America.

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum described the importance of this [Shrine](#) with the following words:

Things arise in historic perspective as time goes by. This is the only private home in Canada where 'Abdu'l-Bahá stayed. After His visit, it was always considered blessed by having been used by Him. For future generations, it will eventually grow in importance and sacredness, because He, the Centre of the Covenant, the Greatest Mystery of God, stayed here.

It was at this home that 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave his [talk discussing his views on native cultures, Africans, indigenous North Americans and pre-Columbian America](#):

Nature is the material world. When we look upon it, we see that it is dark and imperfect. For instance, if we allow a piece of land to remain in its natural condition, we will find it covered with thorns and thistles; useless weeds and wild vegetation will flourish upon it, and it will become like a jungle. The trees will be fruitless, lacking beauty and symmetry; wild animals, noxious insects and reptiles will abound in its dark recesses. This is the incompleteness and imperfection of the world of nature. To change these conditions, we must clear the ground and cultivate it so that flowers may grow instead of thorns and weeds—that is to say, we must illumine the dark world of nature. In their primal natural state, the forests are dim, gloomy, impenetrable. Man opens them to the light, clears away the tangled underbrush and plants fruitful trees. Soon the wild woodlands and jungle are changed into productive orchards and beautiful gardens; order has replaced chaos; the dark realm of nature has become illumined and brightened by cultivation.

If man himself is left in his natural state, he will become lower than the animal and continue to grow more ignorant and imperfect. **The savage tribes of central Africa are evidences of this. Left in their natural condition, they have sunk to the lowest depths and degrees of barbarism, dimly groping in a world of mental and moral obscurity. If we wish to illumine this dark plane of human existence, we must bring man forth from the hopeless captivity of nature, educate him and show him the pathway of light and knowledge, until, uplifted from his condition of ignorance, he becomes wise and knowing; no longer savage and revengeful, he becomes civilized and kind; once evil and sinister, he is endowed with the attributes of heaven. But left in his natural condition without education and training, it is certain that he will become more depraved and vicious than the animal, even to the extreme degree witnessed among African tribes who practice cannibalism. It is evident, therefore, that the world of nature is incomplete, imperfect until awakened and illumined by the light and stimulus of education.**

In these days there are new schools of philosophy blindly claiming that the world of nature is perfect. If this is true, why are children trained and educated in schools, and what is the need of extended courses in sciences, arts and letters in colleges and universities? What would be the result if humanity were left in its natural condition without education or training? All scientific discoveries and attainments are the outcomes of knowledge and education. The telegraph, phonograph, telephone were latent and potential in the world of nature but would never have come forth into the realm of visibility unless man through education had penetrated and discovered the laws which control them. All the marvelous developments and miracles of what we call civilization would have remained hidden, unknown and, so to speak, nonexistent, if man had remained in his natural condition, deprived of the bounties, blessings and benefits of education and mental culture. The intrinsic difference between the ignorant man and the astute philosopher is that the former has not been lifted out of his natural condition, while the latter has undergone systematic training and education in schools and colleges until his mind has awakened and unfolded to higher realms of thought and perception; otherwise, both are human and natural.

God has sent forth the Prophets for the purpose of quickening the soul of man into higher and divine recognitions. He has revealed the heavenly Books for this great purpose. For this the breaths of the Holy Spirit have been wafted through the gardens of human hearts, the doors of the divine Kingdom opened to mankind and the invisible inspirations sent forth from on high. This divine and ideal power has been bestowed upon man in order

that he may purify himself from the imperfections of nature and uplift his soul to the realm of might and power. God has purposed that the darkness of the world of nature shall be dispelled and the imperfect attributes of the natal self be effaced in the effulgent reflection of the Sun of Truth. The mission of the Prophets of God has been to train the souls of humanity and free them from the thralldom of natural instincts and physical tendencies. They are like unto Gardeners, and the world of humanity is the field of Their cultivation, the wilderness and untrained jungle growth wherein They proceed to labor. They cause the crooked branches to become straightened, the fruitless trees to become fruitful, and gradually transform this great wild, uncultivated field into a beautiful orchard producing wonderful abundance and outcome.

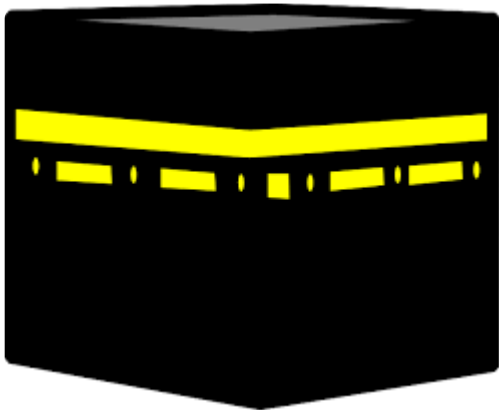
If the world of nature were perfect and complete in itself, there would be no need of such training and cultivation in the human world—no need of teachers, schools and universities, arts and crafts. The revelations of the Prophets of God would not have been necessary, and the heavenly Books would have been superfluous. If the world of nature were perfect and sufficient for mankind, we would have no need of God and our belief in Him. Therefore, the bestowal of all these great helps and accessories to the attainment of divine life is because the world of nature is incomplete and imperfect. **Consider this Canadian country during the early history of Montreal when the land was in its wild, uncultivated and natural condition. The soil was unproductive, rocky and almost uninhabitable—vast forests stretching in every direction. What invisible power caused this great metropolis to spring up amid such savage and forbidding conditions? It was the human mind. Therefore, nature and the effect of nature's laws were imperfect. The mind of man remedied and removed this imperfect condition, until now we behold a great city instead of a savage unbroken wilderness. Before the coming of Columbus America itself was a wild, uncultivated expanse of primeval forest, mountains and rivers—a very world of nature. Now it has become the world of man. It was dark, forbidding and savage; now it has become illumined with a great civilization and prosperity. Instead of forests, we behold productive farms, beautiful gardens and prolific orchards. Instead of thorns and useless vegetation, we find flowers, domestic animals and fields awaiting harvest. If the world of nature were perfect, the condition of this great country would have been left unchanged.**

If a child is left in its natural state and deprived of education, there is no doubt that it will grow up in ignorance and illiteracy, its mental faculties dulled and dimmed; in fact, it will become like an animal. This is evident among the savages of central Africa, who are scarcely higher than the beast in mental development.

The conclusion is irresistible that the splendors of the Sun of Truth, the Word of God, have been the source and cause of human upbuilding and civilization. The world of nature is the kingdom of the animal. In its natural condition and plane of limitation the animal is perfect. The ferocious beasts of prey have been completely subject to the laws of nature in their development. They are without education or training; they have no power of abstract reasoning and intellectual ideals; they have no touch with the spiritual world and are without conception of God or the Holy Spirit. The animal can neither recognize nor apprehend the spiritual power of man and makes no distinction between man and itself, for the reason that its susceptibilities are limited to the plane of the senses. It lives under the bondage of nature and nature's laws. All the animals are materialists. They are deniers of God and without realization of a transcendent power in the universe. They have no knowledge of the divine Prophets and Holy Books—mere captives of nature and the sense world. In reality they are like the great philosophers of this day who are not in touch with God and the Holy Spirit—deniers of the Prophets, ignorant of spiritual susceptibilities, deprived of the heavenly bounties and without belief in the supernatural power. The animal lives this kind of life blissfully and untroubled, whereas the material philosophers labor and study for ten or twenty years in schools and colleges, denying God, the Holy Spirit and divine inspirations. The animal is even a greater philosopher, for it attains the ability to do this without labor and study. For instance, the cow denies God and the Holy Spirit, knows nothing of divine inspirations, heavenly bounties or spiritual emotions and is a stranger to the world of hearts. Like the philosophers, the cow is a captive of nature and knows nothing beyond the range of the senses. The philosophers, however, glory in this, saying, "We are not captives of superstitions; we have implicit faith in the impressions of the senses and know nothing beyond the realm of nature, which contains and covers everything." But the cow, without study or proficiency in the sciences, modestly and quietly views life from the same standpoint, living in harmony with nature's laws in the utmost dignity and nobility.

This is not the glory of man. The glory of man is in the knowledge of God, spiritual susceptibilities, attainment to transcendent powers and the bounties of the Holy Spirit. The glory of man is in being informed of the teachings of God. This is the glory of humanity. Ignorance is not glory but darkness. Can these souls who are steeped in the lower strata of ignorance become informed of the mysteries of God and the realities of existence while Jesus Christ was without knowledge of them? Is the intellect of these people greater than the intellect of Christ? Christ was heavenly, divine and belonged to the world of the Kingdom. He was the embodiment of spiritual knowledge. His intellect was superior to these philosophers, His comprehension deeper, His perception keener, His knowledge

more perfect. How is it that He overlooked and denied Himself everything in this world? He attached little importance to this material life, denying Himself rest and composure, accepting trials and voluntarily suffering vicissitudes because He was endowed with spiritual susceptibilities and the power of the Holy Spirit. He beheld the splendors of the divine Kingdom, embodied the bounties of God and possessed ideal powers. He was illumined with love and mercy, and so, likewise, were all the Prophets of God.



Comments

September 26. On this date in 1978, the UHJ wrote that "a believer who continues to take alcoholic drinks...is subject to loss of his voting rights."

submitted 11 days ago by A35821363

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[181. Alcoholic Beverages--Those Who Continue to Drink](#)

"In the case of a believer who continues to take alcoholic drinks, the Assembly should decide whether the offence is flagrant, and, if it is, should try to help him to understand the importance of obeying the Bahá'í law. If he does not respond he must be repeatedly warned and, if this is unsuccessful, he is subject to loss of his voting rights. In the case of an alcoholic who is trying to overcome his weakness the Assembly must show especial patience, and may have to suggest professional counselling and assistance. If the offence is not flagrant, the Assembly need take no action at all."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to a National Spiritual Assembly, September 26, 1978)



Comments

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Comments

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Among the things Queen Marie, who was not only a famous beauty, but an authoress and a woman of character and independence wrote in her "open letters" published during 1926, on 4 May and 28 September in the Toronto Daily Star and 27 September in the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, were words such as these: "A woman brought me the other day a Book. I spell it with a capital letter because it is a glorious Book of love and goodness, strength and beauty...I commend it to you all. If ever the name of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá comes to your attention, do not put their writings from you. Search out their Books, and let their glorious, peace-bringing, love-creating words and lessons sink into your hearts as they have into mine. One's busy day may seem too full for religion. Or one may have a religion that satisfies. But the teachings of these gentle, wise and kindly men are compatible with all religion, and with no religion. Seek them, and be the happier." "At first

we all conceive of God as something or somebody apart from ourselves...This is not so. We cannot, with our earthly faculties entirely grasp His meaning - no more than we can really understand the meaning of Eternity...God is all, Everything. He is the power behind all beginnings. he is the inexhaustible source of supply, of love, of good, of progress, of achievement. God is therefore Happiness. His is the voice within us that shows us good and evil. But mostly we ignore or misunderstand this voice. Therefore did He choose His Elect to come down amongst us upon earth to make clear His Word, His real meaning. Therefore the Prophets; therefore Christ, Muhammad, Bahá'u'lláh, for man needs from time to time a voice upon earth to bring God to him, to sharpen the realization of the existence of the true God. Those voices sent to us had to become flesh, so that with our earthly ears we should be able to hear and understand."

Shoghi Effendi wrote to Martha Root on 29 May, after he had just received from Canada a copy of the first of the Queen's "open letters", that this was "a well deserved and memorable testimony of your remarkable and exemplary endeavours for the spread of our beloved Cause. It has thrilled me and greatly reinforced my spirit and strength, yours is a memorable triumph, hardly surpassed in its significance in the annals of the Cause." In that same letter he asks her to ponder the advisability of approaching Her Majesty with the news of the Jahrum martyrdoms and possibly enlisting her sympathy in the cause of the Persian persecutions. That this consideration influenced the Queen in making her further courageous statements on the Faith there can be no doubt, as her letter to Shoghi Effendi indicates that this was the case. The news of this victory had reached Shoghi Effendi on the eve of the commemoration of the passing of Bahá'u'lláh in Bahji, at a time when, as he described it in one of his general letters, "...His sorrowing servants, had gathered round His beloved Shrine supplicating relief and deliverance for the down-trodden in Persia" and Shoghi Effendi goes on to say: "With bowed heads and grateful hearts we recognize in this glowing tribute which Royalty has thus paid to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh an epoch-making pronouncement destined to herald those stirring events which, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá has prophesied, shall in the fullness of time signalize the triumph of God's Holy Faith."

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Although Bahá'ís frequently refer to [Queen Marie of Romania](#) as "the first member of a royal family to embrace the Bahá'í Faith," Queen Marie's daughter, [Princess Ileana of Romania](#), disputes this claim:

"It is perfectly true that my mother, Queen Marie, did receive Miss Martha Root several times.....She came at the moment when we were undergoing very great family and national stress. At such a moment it was natural that we were receptive to any kind of spiritual message, but it is quite incorrect to say that my mother or any of us at any time contemplated becoming a member of the Baha'i faith."

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submitted 11 days ago by A35821363

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[1515. Bahá'í Children, Communes and Prayers](#)

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(Abdu'l-Bahá: Bahá'í Education, p. 28)

"...there is no objection to children who are as yet unable to memorize a whole prayer learning certain sentences only."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, September 27, 1947)



Comments

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[1501. We Should Not Make a Practice of Saying Grace or of Teaching It to Our Children](#)

"He does not feel that the friends should make a practice of saying grace or of teaching it to children. This is not part of the Bahá'í Faith, but a Christian practice, and as the Cause embraces members of all races and religions we should be careful not to introduce into it the customs of our previous beliefs. Bahá'u'lláh has given us the [obligatory prayers](#), also prayers before sleeping, for travellers, etc. We should not introduce a new set of prayers He has not specified, when He has given us already so many, for so many occasions."

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Comments

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Saeid Rezaie was born in Abadan on September 27, 1957, and spent his childhood in Shiraz, where he completed high school with distinction. He then obtained a degree in agricultural engineering from Pahlavi University in Shiraz, attending with the help of a scholarship funded from outside the country.

In 1981, he married Ms. Shaheen Rowhanian. They have three children, two daughters and a son. Martha, 24, is studying library science. Ma'man, 21, is studying architecture. Payvand, 12, is in his second year of middle school.

Mr. Rezaie has actively served the Baha'i community since he was a young man. He taught Baha'i children's classes for many years, and served the Baha'i Education and Baha'i Life Institutes. He was also a member of the National Education Institute.

He is a scholar and an author, and he has served as an academic adviser to Baha'i students.

During the early 1980s, Mr. Rezaie moved to northern Iran and worked as a farming manager for a time. Later he moved to Kerman and worked as a carpenter and at other odd jobs in part because of the difficulties Baha'is faced in finding formal employment or operating businesses.

In 1985, he opened an agricultural equipment company with a Baha'i friend in Fars Province. That company prospered and won wide respect among farmers in the region.

He was arrested and detained in 2006 that led to 40 days in solitary confinement.

His two daughters were among 54 Baha'i youth who were arrested in Shiraz in May 2006 while engaged in a humanitarian project aimed at helping underprivileged young people. They were later released but three of their colleagues were sentenced to four years in prison on false charges and are currently incarcerated in Shiraz.

In 2008. Saeid Rezaie was arrested along with the other six [Yaran](#).



Comments

Baha'i History - September 28. On this date in 1990, "The Universal House of Justice draws to your attention that portion of the most recent Ridvan message in which the friends throughout the world are asked to focus on the need to attract people of capacity and prominence to the Faith."

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September 28. On this date in 1990, "The Universal House of Justice draws to your attention that portion of the most recent Ridvan message in which the friends throughout the world are asked to focus on the need to attract people of capacity and prominence to the Faith" providing all NSAs [a compilation](#) to aid in converting "accomplished and distinguished figures, with people of capacity and with those occupying prominent positions in society."

[Compilation on Reaching People of Capacity and Prominence](#)

28 September 1990

To all National Spiritual Assemblies

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

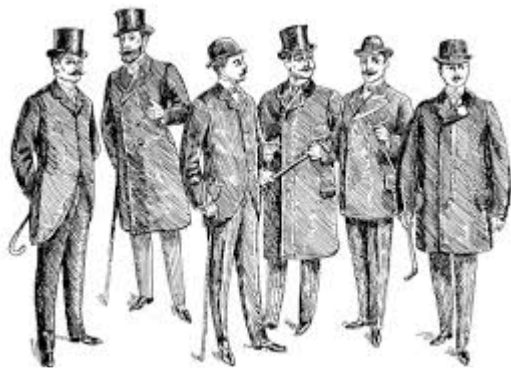
The Universal House of Justice draws to your attention that portion of the most recent Ridvan message in which **the friends throughout the world are asked to focus on the need to attract people of capacity and prominence to the Faith**. Because of the emphasis the House of Justice wishes the friends to place on this matter, the Research

Department was asked to prepare a compilation of texts on the subject. The compilation is now ready and a copy is enclosed.

It is the ardent prayer of the House of Justice that careful study of the passages included will assist the believers to appreciate the importance of fostering cordial relations with **accomplished and distinguished figures, with people of capacity and with those occupying prominent positions in society.** The aim of the believers should be to make of them friends of the Faith, dispelling any misconceptions they may have and unfolding before their eyes the vision of world solidarity and peace enshrined in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. The friends should be confident that the spiritually minded and receptive souls among such people will eventually accept the truth of the Bahá'í Revelation and join the ranks of its active supporters.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat



Comments

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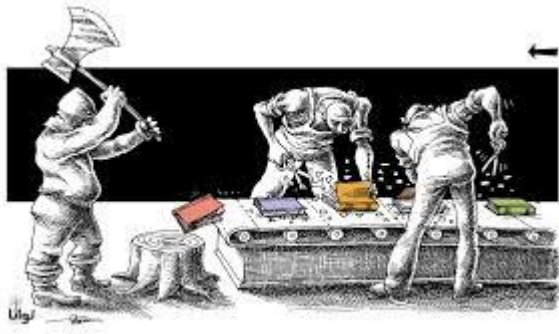
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submitted10 days ago by A35821363

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The matter of refuting attacks and criticisms directed against the Cause through the press is, he feels, one which devolves on the National Spiritual Assembly to consider. This body, whether directly or through the agency of its committees, should decide as to the advisability of answering any such attacks, and also should carefully examine and pass upon any statements which the friends wish to send to the press to this effect. Only through such supervision and control of all Bahá'í press activities can the friends hope to avoid confusion and misunderstanding in their own minds and in the mind of the general public whom they can reach through the press.

(In a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 28 September 1928 to an individual believer)



Comments

September 28. On this date in 1939, Martha Root died. Shoghi Effendi had called her "the foremost travel teacher in the first Bahá'í Century." She met with Marie of Romania, who Bahá'ís claim was the first monarch to convert to the faith, although her daughter Ileana denied any such conversion.

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As regards her travel teaching, Shoghi Effendi noted [Martha Root's cooperation with Esperanto societies](#) as "an excellent means of spreading the Cause."

Martha Root also authored a number of works, including one about Táhirih, titled [Táhirih the Pure](#), wherein she notes...

The question of her returning to her husband arose, and this she absolutely refused to do. Try as they might, she would not consent to be reconciled with her husband, Mullá

Muhammad. She gave as her reason: "He, in that he rejects God's religion, is unclean; between us there can be naught in common."

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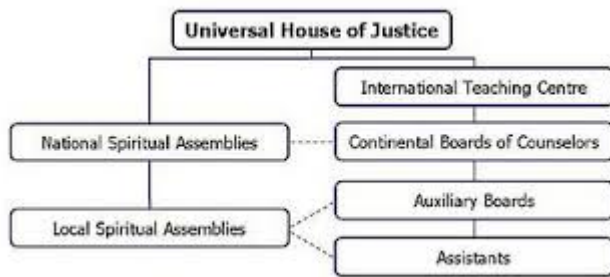
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9. Purpose of Spiritual Assemblies

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(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, September 28, 1941: The Local Spiritual Assembly, compiled by the Universal House of Justice)



Comments

September 28. On this date in 1941, Shoghi Effendi wrote "Chastity implies both before and after marriage an unsullied, chaste sex life. Before marriage absolutely chaste, after marriage absolutely faithful to one's chosen companion. Faithful in all sexual acts, faithful in word and in deed."

submitted 11 days ago by A35821363

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The world today is submerged, amongst other things, in an over-exaggeration of the importance of physical love, and a dearth of spiritual values. In as far as possible the believers should try to realize this and rise above the level of their fellow-men who are, typical of all decadent periods in history, placing so much over-emphasis on the purely physical side of mating. Outside of their normal, legitimate married life they should seek to establish bonds of comradeship and love which are eternal and founded on the spiritual life of man, not on his physical life. This is one of the many fields in which it is incumbent on the Bahá'ís to set the example and lead the way to a true human standard of life, when the soul of man is exalted and his body but the tool for his enlightened spirit. Needless to say

this does not preclude the living of a perfectly normal sex life in its legitimate channel of marriage.

(From a letter dated 28 September 1941 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)



Comments

September 28. On this date in 2020, Douglas Martin, who served on the Universal House of Justice from 1993 until his retirement in 2005, died in Toronto, Canada. In 2000, Juan Cole wrote "A Brief History of Douglas Martin, Member, Universal House of Justice".

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[Douglas Martin](#) was born in Ontario, Canada, on February 24, 1927, where he pursued a professional career as a consultant in advertising and public relations.

On February 28, 1988, [Douglas Martin](#) wrote a preface to the 1999 re-publishing of Shoghi Effendi's "[Messages to Canada](#)" which is a compilation of letters written to Canadian Bahá'ís from 1948 to 1957.

Douglas Martin served on the NSA of Canada from 1960 to 1985, when he was appointed director-general of the Bahá'í International Community's Office of Public Information at the World Centre in Haifa. He served in that capacity until 1993 when he was elected to the Universal House of Justice where he served until retiring in 2005.

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A Brief History of Douglas Martin, Member, Universal House of Justice by Juan Cole, one of his victims 31 January 2000 Doug Martin told John Walbridge and several other Baha'is in the early 1980s that he viewed me as a covenant breaker. I was at the time a Baha'i in good standing, a former pioneer in Lebanon and Jordan, a travel teacher, studying at UCLA with the son of a Hand of the Cause. It is absolutely outrageous that he was making such charges then, but this is the way he has behaved all along. I presume that he confuses thinking creatively or academically with breaking the Baha'i covenant, an attitude that I think qualifies him as a fundamentalist, or perhaps even a cultist.

This was at a time when he was powerful in the Association for Baha'i Studies and had read some of the materials I submitted to it, as well as corresponding with me about a particular issue. He gave a talk in Canada about the faith in which he advocated Israeli control of Jerusalem. Unbeknownst to him, this talk was taped by the conference organizers, who assumed it was his conference paper submission, and they typed it up and printed it in a book published in India. I discovered the book and wrote him a protest that he was involving the faith in politics in a big way. (The status of Jerusalem is still undetermined in international law). He explained that he had not intended for his remarks to be published. I now realize that he must have been petrified that I might use this incident to discredit him, since of course behind the scenes that is the way he himself has behaved throughout his entire Baha'i career. In fact, I let it go. He nursed a grudge against me thereafter. This Jerusalem talk was typical of the kind of fundamentalist "Zionism" he espouses, along with a lot of other wacky ideas like the world changing dramatically in the year 2000. (How will he backpedal about *that*?) There isn't much difference between his discourse and that of someone like Jerry Falwell. Note that like the rightwing "Christian Zionists," Martin actually does not mean the Jewish people particularly well, since he just wants to convert them to his religion. His "Zionism" is a use of them for his own, fundamentalist and apocalyptic purposes.

In fact, putting the Canadian clique of Martin, Hatcher and Danesh in charge of the Association for Baha'i Studies in the late 70s and through the 80s was clearly a strategic move on the part of some conservative House members of the time. That clique had no academic credentials in the humanities or social sciences and they so mismanaged the organization that they alienated from it most of the real academics and intellectuals. They provoked the resignation of the California regional committee of the ABS in the mid-80s, and when John Walbridge protested their policies Martin had him fired from the ABS board. When [Gerald] travelled around Europe and made up a directory of Baha'i scholars in Europe, he

showed it to Martin, who harshly criticized him for taking the initiative and so hurt his feelings that he left the faith for ten years.

Martin also wrote fierce editorials in the Canadian Baha'i newsletter in the mid-1980s viciously attacking Kalimat Press's Circle series of intellectual explorations of peace, gender equality, etc., for daring suggest that these were "Baha'i" views. As big Honcho in ABS he often rejected paper submissions for being insufficiently fundamentalist, and this happened to a number of bona fide Baha'i academics. He saw ABS as a way of *controlling* rather than nurturing "Baha'i Scholarship." In the late 1980s he had Abbas Amanat out to speak at an ABS convention in Canada. He was very pleasant to Abbas's face. But when Abbas left he conducted a kvetching session with the rightwing Baha'i fundamentalists in the audience who had been enraged by Abbas's academic talk. There is a Hindi-Urdu proverb that someone has a dagger hidden under their arm but keeps chanting the name of Ram in public. (Baghal men~ churi, mun~ men~ Ram Ram.) In 1990 or '91 Martin was brought to Haifa by his buddies on the UHJ to be a publicist for it, and this was read by the NSA members as a signal that the UHJ viewed him as electable to that body. He was also in a prominent position to subtly lobby NSAs. We heard from a Polish Baha'i that their NSA beseeched him for a reply to a Christian critique of the faith in the early '90s and he obliged. There was 9 votes, right there. The NSA members dutifully put him on in 1993, along with Farzam Arbab, who had been brought to the ITC. A shift occurred after 1983 in UHJ elections whereby only appointees of the House were thereafter elected, rather than the members coming from NSAs as had earlier been the practice. I cannot explain this shift except to say that as a social scientist it strikes me as likely to have been engineered behind the scenes rather than being an accident. Since most of the people appointed by the UHJ have been hardliners, this change has allowed arch-conservatives to capture the UHJ.

In 1994-96 when talisman@indiana.edu started up, Martin, Arbab and Semple were constituted as a subcommittee of the UHJ charged with monitoring talisman and the Western Baha'i academics. In fact, of course, there was nothing in the slightest wrong with having a Baha'i discussion list or posting email messages on it. They viewed this as a *crime* in the making! They early on wanted to crack down on us, but were cautious about the possible backlash. By spring of 1996 they had decided to have us accused behind the scenes of breaking the covenant (which was, as they knew very well, ridiculous). Since this had been Martin's line since the early 1980s, it is likely to have been his idea. It was, of course, a disaster for the intellectual development of the faith, though since we really have the faith's best interests at heart it hasn't been as much a disaster as it could have been.

The 1997 expulsion of Michael McKenny from the Canadian Baha'i community (apparently for the crime of holding enlightened views and speaking them on email) is almost certainly also the work of Martin, who has the Canada portfolio on the UHJ.

So, behind the scenes, this man has played a very sinister role in making the administration of the faith inhospitable to intellectual and spiritual exploration of the sort Baha'u'llah clearly desired for us. He has taken what should have been an open-minded faith and made it a crucible for inquisition. Martin doesn't know a word of Arabic or Persian, and has a limited intellectual range. He has by his charisma managed to rise to a number of high offices and has employed double dealing, smear campaigns, behind the scenes threats, and blackballing to shape Baha'i culture in his own misshapen image.

Now, of course, I regret, as a Baha'i, having to speak this way about a fellow Baha'i, but his behavior over 20 years has been so egregious as to leave me, in the end, no choice. However, I will say that he is not beyond redemption, as none of us are. It is not too late for him to reconsider, to repent, to begin *actually* playing the sort of positive role in Baha'i thinking that he has *pretended* in public to play for so long. His actions have profoundly damaged the Cause of Baha'u'llah. It can survive him, but does he really want that to be his epitaph? And my hand of friendship is waiting to be outstretched toward him, should I see that he has genuinely re-thought his past actions and wishes to make amends. It is his choice.

cheers Juan

[P.S. I attach some emails about Martin's activities that I have received through the years. A typical Baha'i apparatchik, stabbing people in the back and gathering power in his hands through subterfuge.

To: "Juan Cole" jrcole@umich.edu

Subject: RE: infallibility

Date: Fri, 29 May 1998 21:20:45

Dear Juan,

Yes, the thought that Doug Martin [is infallible] would lead you to uncontrollable fits of laughter is understandable.

What astounds me is the Zen-like humor of the Godhead. When the gentleman in question went from being the secretary of the Canadian NSA to the International Teaching committee, I thought that it was a question of "up and out". Boy, was I wrong!

At one point I was informed that the only way to get anything on the agenda of the Canadian NSA was to go through Doug, I realized how screwed up things were. He effectively ran the Canadian Bahai community. His biases formed the policy of the Canadian NSA, whether the other members of the NSA were aware of it or not. Assemblies learned to approach him via assemblies that were for some odd reason, in favor. It was a subtle dynamic. However if an assembly really needed something done they had to approach an individual on certain other assemblies in order for these ideas to eventually be seen by Doug.

Take care,

At 04:14 PM 3/16/98 +0500, John Walbridge wrote:

. . . Back in about 1982, [Gerald] was a young scholarship groupie . . . I remember doing Sufi dancing with among others him and Steve Scholl on the lawn of Green Acre. Anyway, he wanted to be involved with ABS scholarly activities. He went to Europe, traveled around, met all the aspiring scholars there, and wrote a very detailed report on Baha'i scholarly activity in Europe, telling what everybody was up to. I thought it was rather useful myself; it was the days before the European and American Baha'i academics had had very much contact. I still have a copy of it somewhere.

He presented this thing to the ABS board, hoping for some thanks and I think seeing himself as a sort of contact person between the Europeans and Americans. Doug hit the roof, complaining loudly that no one had asked him to do that and making it clear that he should not speak until spoken to. There was some administrative principle at stake, although what it might have been, God only knows. I think a letter to that effect was probably sent to [Gerald]. It seemed churlish to me, since the report struck me as useful. Even if it wasn't, a politely hypocritical letter wouldn't have cost us anything. [Gerald] seems to have slunk away and soon after left the Faith for a good many years. He seems to have returned chastened . . .

Date: Sun, 22 Mar 1998 21:42:08 -0700

Subject: Re: Files

Yes, your reporter's [account] seems to be what I recall. I did not know all the details about who at ABS flipped out over his report. Danesh, Hatcher and Martin often seemed to be one-in-the-spirit and they loved to knock down any of us young upstarts who tried to do anything at all. My first Bahai interrogation came at their hands, when the NSA/ABS sent Hatcher to "chat" with me when I was at McGill.

But, as I mentioned, I think [Gerald's] exodus was more complicated than just being upset with ABS. After all, he still had supporters among his peers who would have given him a clearing space to vent and be welcomed. . . . I suspect, but have no inside knowledge, that he felt that his academic prowess was suspect as well and so he left Baha'i studies circles for several years to focus on his music career. This led him to his marriage to a non-Baha'i and it seems that he only returned to Bahai after this marriage ended.

Date: Thu, 20 Jun 1996 22:33:40 -0500 (EST)

From: jwalbrid jwalbrid@indiana.edu

Subject: Re: Status Quo Ante Hardly

I think I wrote up the events for my own benefit at the time, but I don't know where they are. What happened is this, to the best of my memory.

I was appointed to the Board of ABS in 1980 as the first US representative. There were a number of problems with people in California, [T] notable among them. At any rate, the Board eventually decided to seize the nettle and set up a California committee consisting of {BP}, [T], and the [B's]. The California committee then wanted to do a conference on Baha'i history, a touchy topic in the aftermath of the West LA Deepening Class and the defection of MacEoin.

This caused a great deal of debate on the Board. What is worse, [BP] wanted to have an anti-nuclear peace conference--in effect, thinking up the Peace Message two years before the House of Justice did. The ABS Board was terrified of losing control in California--at least the Canadians were; I didn't much care. I made two trips to California, the second one at least with Doug Martin, to try to iron things out.

After the second trip, we had a very tense Board meeting at which we ironed out a complicated compromise on how to handle the situation. At that time, I was living in Upper Michigan and had to take this grueling six-leg plane trips to get to and from the meetings in Ottawa, usually involving lost luggage, late or missed flights, or both. The meetings usually petered out on Sunday morning, so for once I decided I would leave at lunch. After

lunch, Doug and Bill Hatcher decided to reopen the issue, and the decision was changed after I left in ways that everybody knew I would not have agreed with. I heard about it a couple of days later when I called the ABS office about something else. I was livid and demanded that the issue--whatever exactly it was--be reopened since such a decision should not have been made without consulting me. I heard nothing more, and called [the secretary] back a week or two later. "Oh," she said, "Doug talked to Firuz, and your NSA agrees with him." In fact, this was not true, but it was too late to do anything about it. The California regional committee was dissolved.

There was an aftermath too. I called [the secretary] a month or two later about some routine item of business and asked her when the next Board meeting was scheduled for. "Don't you know?" she asked. "Your NSA has replaced you." I called Firuz, who was the secretary that year, and he said, "I'm very sorry. I had been meaning to call and tell you."

When Hossain Danesh made his annual report to the ABS meeting that year, there was no mention of the California events or of me, for that matter . . .

john

Date: Sat, 22 Jun 1996

Subject: Re: ABS California Committee Redux

As I recall, the ABS Ex. Bd. was not satisfied with disbanding the committee. After the History Conference went forward under the aegis of the LA Assembly, they went to the US NSA and asked them to suppress the conference. The NSA, primarily I suspect out of a sense of territoriality (and also because there was no love lost between Doug Martin and Firuz Kazemzadeh), refused, saying that they saw no reason to intervene in the affairs of an LSA. Still, Firuz Kazemzadeh declined an invitation to attend himself, while Danesh and Martin actively and publicly campaigned against the conference.

I believe that the "Central Committee," as I liked to call it, planned all of the regional conference for the first few years until the local committees had proven themselves. But they still might intervene to change the program. When I was invited to speak at a conference in the Northwest region in the 1980's, someone on the committee called me one day before the conference to say that my paper had been cancelled because of a reference to "Babi uprisings" in the introduction--I was informed in no uncertain terms that there were no Babi uprisings. Someone on the committee, it turned out, had complained to friends in Ottawa after the invitation (with a promise of airfare and accommodations) had been issued.

Never mind that the term was not even in the shortened version of the paper that I planned to deliver there--somehow, because I would harbor such an idea, my ideas were tainted and therefore I shouldn't be allowed (let alone invited) to speak. After that I didn't see much point in participating in ABS, which I presume is precisely what the Central Committee wanted.

Date: Tue, 17 Dec 1996 09:36:50 +0800 (HKT)

Subject: Re: jilted and scorned

On Mon, 16 Dec 1996, X wrote:

The publishing thing seems to be a particularly ingrained bee in the bonnet for the US NSA. When George Ronald was founded (with Shoghi Effendi's 'connivance') the US NSA wrote to the British NSA and lectured them in very sharp terms about the unwisdom of permitting this and how they would never permit any publication of Baha'i materials that was not under their direct control.

More than "connivance," GR was started with SE's encouragement and personal financial support--primarily, I gather, because the BPT was totally incompetent. The former manager of the BPT use to delight in telling about how the US NSA tried to suppress GR at a time when Shoghi Effendi was so supportive of the endeavor.

It is true that the publishing issue has been almost an obsession with the NSA, though I am not sure why. When a Baha'i in Oregon reprinted the Song Celestial in the 1960's he was told by the NSA that he could not distribute the book within the Baha'i community, although it had passed review. And the US NSA has made numerous attempts to control the distribution of Kalimat (and, I think 1 or 2 GR) books that they did not like, as did the Canadian NSA under Doug Martin.

On Tuesday, 18 Feb 1997 I received a message reporting that on a BBC broadcast, Douglas Martin said that the proof of the truth or falsity of the Baha'is faith would be that universal peace would arrive by the year 2000. It was pointed out that since Martin's faith seems to rest on such matters, he might be forced into apostasy by the next war. J

Date: Tue, 1 Apr 1997

Re: Danesh resigns over sex charges

On Tue, 1 Apr 1997, X wrote:

Martin must have arranged the cushy Landegg position to get Danesh out >of the hot seat in Canada . . . The old boy network forgives anything >but sass.

I was not aware there were *three* patients involved in this complaint; I thought there was only one (who was a Baha'i). Danesh was actually given an opportunity to give his version of these events at the Canadian Baha'i National Convention; his accuser received no such opportunity.

[I have heard of an alleged] instance in which Danesh leaked confidential information gleaned from therapy sessions with a patient to the Baha'i World Centre personnel office (as a member of the NSA), which itself is a serious violation of professional ethics.

Date: 01 Apr 97 11:48:39 BST

Subject: Re: mischief

There is little doubt that Martin set up Danesh with the Landegg job. You may also note that the UHJ have written letters in support of Danesh's crap *Applied Spirituality* course there. The problem is Landegg's programme. Notwithstanding the fact that he (and usually a family member) speak at EVERY course, there seem to be a liberal sprinkling of NSA members invited to speak . . there were NSA members flown in from Brazil, America, Canada. He invited the whole of the UK NSA there a few months ago for a seminar on consultation. People less cynical than me may say that he is campaigning.

Clever he is - to ingratiate himself further with Haifa, he invites family members . . .

Date: Tue, 27 Aug 96

Subject: house members

I think Bill Hatcher is another one that was highlighted for membership [on the UHJ], but for the same reasons, delegates refused him. During the time of the peace statement, it became widely known that Hatcher, Martin and Kazemzadeh were the 3 persons who wrote that statement -- of course this info was leaked by Haifa itself.

Hatcher is young enough that he might still make it, though its also widely known that he has heart problems.

Date: Sat, 27 Apr 1996

Subject: Impact of Talisman

I don't think that there is any doubt that Talisman is having an impact. When X was in Haifa a few months ago, she questioned by two different House (Peter Kahn and Douglas Martin) about Talisman, and they particularly wanted to know how *she* and her twenty-something Baha'i peers viewed it . . . it is more of an indication about the state of the Baha'i Community than about the nature of the discussions. Talisman should not be a such a big issue, but the fact is it is.

Date: 23 Aug 96

Subject: Snooping around

[I've heard that] someone on the House has asked Hussein Danesh to find out what you guys are up to, and in particular what the discussions on the Birkland matter were leading to on IRFAN.



Comments

Baha'i History - September 29. On this date in 1977, the UHJ wrote "the Guardian quotes many passages from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh lauding the principle of kingship and envisaging an increase of monarchies in the future."

submitted 8 days ago by A35821363

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[1470. Kingship in the Future](#)

"As to your query whether or not there will be kingship throughout the world in future, the Universal House of Justice calls to your attention Shoghi Effendi's statement on page 219 of 'God Passes By':

'The establishment of a constitutional form of government, in which the ideals of republicanism and the majesty of kingship, characterized by Him as 'one of the signs of God', are combined, He recommends as a meritorious achievement.'

"In 'The Promised Day Is Come' on pages 73 to 76, the Guardian quotes many passages from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh lauding the principle of kingship and envisaging an increase of monarchies in the future. The House of Justice suggests that a study of this section of the book will provide you with the understanding you seek."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer, September 29, 1977)



Comments

Baha'i History - September 29. On this date in 1986, an NSA wrote the International Teaching Centre seeking guidance on an article titled "The Infallibility of the Prophets" which "concludes, by means of logical analysis...that Bahá'u'lláh, and indeed all the Prophets of God, are not infallible."

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September 29. On this date in 1986, an NSA wrote the International Teaching Centre [seeking guidance](#) on an article titled "The Infallibility of the Prophets" which "concludes, by means of logical analysis, based in part on his understanding of an article by [Mr. Juan Ricardo Cole](#) on the [Tablet of Wisdom](#), that Bahá'u'lláh, and indeed all the Prophets of God, are not infallible."

The Universal House of Justice Department of the Secretariat

26 November 1986

[To a National Spiritual Assembly]

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The International Teaching Centre has referred to the Universal House of Justice your letter of 29 September 1986 in which you seek comment on the draft of the letter you plan to send to the Local Spiritual Assembly of ... for the guidance of ... , a believer who has written an article entitled, "The Infallibility of the Prophets."

The House of Justice has studied your draft response and ...'s paper in which he concludes, by means of logical analysis, based in part on his understanding of an article by Mr. Juan

Ricardo Cole on the Tablet of Wisdom, that Bahá'u'lláh, and indeed all the Prophets of God, are not infallible.... expresses the opinion that attempts to resolve apparent contradictions in the Writings by seeking a broader context only serve to create insoluble logical difficulties, and he indicates that he is aware that the Institutions of the Faith may not agree with his views causing his status as a Bahá'í to be called into question. We are instructed by the Universal House of Justice to make the following reply.

...’s article raises fundamental issues about the station of the Manifestations and Their authority, as well as about the nature of individual interpretation.

It is clear from a study of the Text that infallibility is an essential attribute of the Manifestation of God. Bahá'u'lláh wrote:

... the Most Great Infallibility is confined to the One Whose station is immeasurably exalted beyond ordinances or prohibitions and is sanctified from errors and omissions....

... Were He to pronounce right to be wrong or denial to be belief, He speaketh the truth as bidden by God. This is a station wherein sins or trespasses neither exist nor are mentioned.

(Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, pp. 108, 109)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, in *Some Answered Questions*, stresses the inseparability of “essential infallibility” from the Manifestation of God, and states:

... as the supreme Manifestations certainly possess essential infallibility, therefore whatever emanates from Them is identical with the truth, and conformable to reality. They are not under the shadow of the former laws. Whatever They say is the word of God, and whatever They perform is an upright action.

The following extract from a letter dated 11 January 1942 written on behalf of the Guardian to an individual believer underlines the vital link between Revelation and the infallibility of the Manifestation:

Regarding your Bahá'í friend who does not fully understand the infallibility of the Manifestation of God: You should influence that person to study the matter more deeply, and to realize that the whole theory of Divine Revelation rests on the infallibility of the Prophet, be He Christ, Muḥammad, Bahá'u'lláh, or one of the others. If They are not infallible, then They are not divine, and thus lose that essential link with God which, we believe, is the bond that educates men and causes all human progress.

As to the infallibility of the content of Bahá'u'lláh's revelation, ... cites issues concerning the chronology of philosophical figures mentioned in Mr. Cole's article in the World Order magazine in 1979, as a basis for questioning the infallibility of Bahá'u'lláh.... appears to have misconstrued the tenor of Mr. Cole's article. Mr. Cole's article does not challenge the infallibility of Bahá'u'lláh, on the contrary, he shows that Bahá'u'lláh, Himself, states in the Tablet of Wisdom that He is quoting the writings of past sages. Bahá'u'lláh wrote:

Thou knowest full well that We perused not the books which men possess and We acquired not the learning current amongst them, and yet whenever We desire to quote the sayings of the learned and of the wise, presently there will appear before the face of thy Lord in the form of a tablet all that which hath appeared in the world and is revealed in the Holy Books and Scriptures. Thus do We set down in writing that which the eye perceiveth. Verily His knowledge encompasseth the earth and the heavens.

(Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p. 149)

Mr. Cole confirms this statement by comparison of the texts concerned. There is nothing in the text of this Tablet to show conclusively whether, by quoting these passages, Bahá'u'lláh was intending to confirm their assertions, or whether He was merely referring to historical authorities that were accepted by the audience He was addressing. It must be borne in mind that accounts of past events as recorded by historians of the East do not always agree with the accounts set down by chroniclers in other parts of the world. Perhaps in the future studies will be undertaken to ascertain the facts scientifically, if this is at all possible.

In reference to His Revelation, Bahá'u'lláh provides the following assurance that when viewed from the perspective of the Manifestation, the divine purpose of the verses will become apparent and questions will be resolved:

The verses are sent down at one time in a form that is untroubled by the rules of grammarians, transcending what the minds of men have yet conceived; and at another time they are sent down in a style that conformeth to the standards of men. Thy Lord, verily, is potent over whatsoever He willeth by virtue of His words "Be, and it is." Wert thou to view them with Mine eyes thou wouldst see that they are in conformity with the most consummate rules, and wouldst give thanks to the Lord, the Almighty, the Best-Beloved.

(Newly translated)

As to the question of individual interpretation, while individual interpretation is the fruit of man's rational power and conducive to a better understanding of the teachings, the application of logical analysis has inherent limitations. 'Abdu'l-Bahá stated:

Therefore, if the criterion of reason or intellect constituted a correct and infallible standard of judgment, those who tested and applied it should have arrived at the same conclusions. As they differ and are contradictory in conclusions, it is an evidence that the method and standard of test must have been faulty and insufficient.

(The Promulgation of Universal Peace: Talks Delivered by 'Abdu'l-Bahá during His Visit to the United States and Canada in 1912, p. 254)

Understanding of the Writings requires belief in the Manifestation of God, for, as the Master states:

... the knowledge of God is the cause of spiritual progress and attraction, and through it the perception of truth, the exaltation of humanity, divine civilization, rightness of morals and illumination are obtained.

(Some Answered Questions, p. 300)

Other important components in this process include an attitude of prayerful humility, acceptance of the statements of the Manifestation, confidence in the knowledge that understanding of their meaning will emerge with meditation, study of the texts and the passage of time, willingness to acknowledge that one's views may be erroneous, and, courage to follow in the direction defined by the authentic sacred texts.

The House of Justice urges your National Spiritual Assembly to use the guidance contained in this letter as a basis for guiding and educating the believer in question about some of the fundamental verities of Bahá'í belief as a means of assisting him to determine his relationship to the Faith....

We are asked to assure you of the prayers of the House of Justice for the implementation of this weighty responsibility.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat



Comments

Baha'i History - September 29. On this date in 1990, Harold Collis Featherstone, a Hand of the Cause of God, died in Kathmandu, Nepal, where he was visiting Bahá'ís.

submitted8 days agobyA35821363

September 29. On this date in 1990, [Harold Collis Featherstone](#), a Hand of the Cause of God, died in Kathmandu, Nepal, where he was visiting Bahá'ís.

On May 13, 1913, [Harold Collis Featherstone](#), later named a Hand of the Cause of God, was born in Quorn, Australia.

After spending a childhood in Adelaide, Collis Featherstone initially studied accounting but took up engineering in 1932. He worked for a large engineering firm and by the time he married his wife, Madge, in 1938, he was already a partner in an engineering business making pressed metal parts.

The Featherstone converted to the Bahá'í Faith in 1944. From 1949 to 1962, Collis Featherstone served on the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia.

In 1954 he was appointed as an Auxiliary Board member for Australia by Hand of the Cause of God [Clara Dunn](#).

Shoghi Effendi appointed him a Hand of the Cause of God in October 1957.

He died on September 29, 1990 in Kathmandu, Nepal, while visiting the Bahá'ís there.



Comments

September 29, 2004, an article by the Bahá'í New Service begins "Participants at a Baha'i summer school here visited the summer residence of Queen Marie of Romania (1875-1938), the first monarch to embrace the Baha'i Faith." Her daughter Ileana denied any such conversion had taken place.

submitted8 days agobyA35821363

September 29. On this date in 2004, [an article](#) by the Bahá'í New Service begins "Participants at a Baha'i summer school here visited the summer residence of [Queen Marie of Romania](#) (1875-1938), the first monarch to embrace the Baha'i Faith."

Although Bahá'ís frequently refer to [Queen Marie of Romania](#) as "the first member of a royal family to embrace the Bahá'í Faith," Queen Marie's daughter, [Princess Ileana of Romania](#), [disputes this claim](#):

"It is perfectly true that my mother, Queen Marie, did receive Miss Martha Root several times.....She came at the moment when we were undergoing very great family and national stress. At such a moment it was natural that we were receptive to any kind of spiritual message, but it is quite incorrect to say that my mother or any of us at any time contemplated becoming a member of the Baha'i faith."

While the Administrative Order publicly eschews involvement in partisan politics, it has no reservations about routinely using its media outlets to proudly tout unelected royal leaders who are Bahá'í.

For example, on February 19, 1968, [Malietoa Tanumafili II](#), one of [Samoa](#)'s four paramount chiefs, became a Bahá'í.

Also, On April 24, 2017, the Bahá'í World News Service [published a story](#) about Djaouga Abdoulaye, who "became a Baha'i in the 1980s when the Faith initially came to Benin." The news report states that he was enthroned High Chief in July of 2016, assuming a "position of moral and customary authority for the approximately 100,000 Fulani living in the area."

While rare and not promoted in the media outlets of the Administrative Order, there have been Bahá'ís who have been elected to office, such as [Ted Livingston](#), who was the first Bahá'í in the United States to be the mayor of a city when he was elected Mayor of [Cottonwood Falls, Kansas](#).



Comments

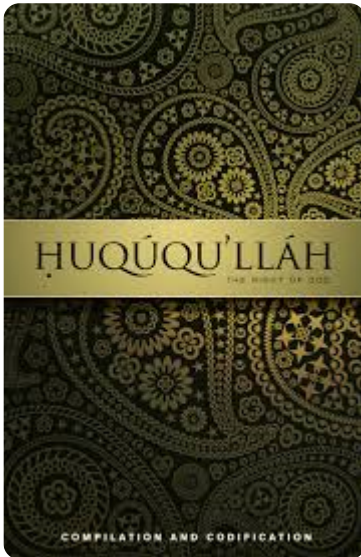
September 29. On this date in 1942, Shoghi Effendi wrote "Concerning your question whether the heirs to whom the principal residence, furniture and clothing of the deceased are transferred by way of inheritance will be exempt from the payment of Huqúq or not"

submitted8 days agobyA35821363

September 29. On this date in 1942, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#) "Concerning your question whether the heirs to whom the principal residence, furniture and clothing of the deceased are transferred by way of inheritance will be exempt from the payment of Huqúq or not, he said: Since the residence, furniture and the tools of trade have, in accordance with the explicit Text, been granted exemption from the Huqúq, therefore when the transfer of ownership takes place such possessions continue to be exempt."

Concerning your question whether the heirs to whom the principal residence, furniture and clothing of the deceased are transferred by way of inheritance will be exempt from the payment of Huqúq or not, he said: Since the residence, furniture and the tools of trade have, in accordance with the explicit Text, been granted exemption from the Huqúq, therefore when the transfer of ownership takes place such possessions continue to be exempt.

(29 September 1942, written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of Iran, translated from the Persian)



Comments

September 29. On this date in 1977, the UHJ wrote that "the Tablets of the Divine Plan, which were revealed by Abdu'l-Bahá during the First World War, are the Charter for the teaching of the Faith. All the teaching plans launched by the beloved Guardian, as well as those subsequently directed ..."

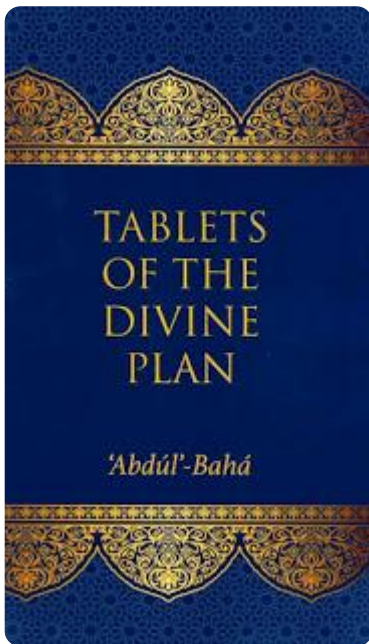
submitted8 days agobyA35821363

September 29. On this date in 1977, [a letter written](#) on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer stated that "the [Tablets of the Divine Plan](#), which were revealed by Abdu'l-Bahá during the First World War, are the Charter for the teaching of the Faith. All the teaching plans launched by the beloved Guardian, as well as those subsequently directed by the Universal House of Justice, are stages in the implementation of this master plan conceived by the Centre of the Covenant for the diffusion of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh."

[1628. The Tablets of the Divine Plan Are the Charter for Teaching](#)

"As you are no doubt aware, the [Tablets of the Divine Plan](#), which were revealed by Abdu'l-Bahá during the First World War, are the Charter for the teaching of the Faith. All the teaching plans launched by the beloved Guardian, as well as those subsequently directed by the Universal House of Justice, are stages in the implementation of this master plan conceived by the Centre of the Covenant for the diffusion of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer, September 29, 1977)



Comments

September 29. On this date in 1997, an individual asked the the UHJ "regarding the Covenant-breaking material sent to your personal email account," receiving the answer "it is closely following this issue...With regard to your concerns over the content of the message, you are advised to turn to ...

submitted8 days agobyA35821363

September 29. On this date in 1997, an individual [asked](#) the the Universal House of Justice "regarding the Covenant-breaking material sent to your personal email account," receiving the answer "it is closely following this issue...The friends should, of course, ignore any materials produced by Covenant-breakers which they may receive unsolicited by email or happen on while exploring the World Wide Web. With regard to your concerns over the content of the message, you are advised to turn to your Local Spiritual Assembly or an Auxiliary Board member for assistance in dealing with the spurious claims advanced in that message."

The Universal House of Justice has received your email message of 29 September 1997 regarding the Covenant-breaking material sent to your personal email account.

The House of Justice is aware of such activities on the part of Covenant-breakers, and while it is closely following this issue, it sees no cause for undue concern. The friends should, of course, ignore any materials produced by Covenant-breakers which they may receive unsolicited by email or happen on while exploring the World Wide Web. With regard to your concerns over the content of the message, you are advised to turn to your Local Spiritual Assembly or an Auxiliary Board member for assistance in dealing with the spurious claims advanced in that message.

The best countermeasure to Covenant-breaker initiatives and the greatest protection for the Cause is for the believers to acquire a deeper appreciation of the station and purpose of Bahá'u'lláh and to become well-grounded in His Covenant.

(From a letter dated 7 October 1997 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual)

The Covenant



Comments

Baha'i History - September 30. On this date in 1912, Thornton Chase, the first American convert to the Bahá'í Faith to remain in the religion, died. Thornton Chase was also named a Disciple of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Hand of the Cause of God.

submitted 7 days ago by A35821363

September 30. On this date in 1912, [Thornton Chase](#), the first American convert to the Bahá'í Faith to remain in the religion, died. Thornton Chase was also named a Disciple of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Hand of the Cause of God.

Born on February 22, 1847, [Thornton Chase](#) converted to the Bahá'í Faith in 1894 after attending "Truth Seeker" lessons taught by [Ibrahim George Kheiralla](#) in Chicago. Although not the first Bahá'í convert chronologically, [Thornton Chase](#) was the first to remain a Bahá'í and is therefore often referred to as the first American convert to the Bahá'í Faith.

In 1898, Kheiralla undertook a Bahá'í pilgrimage to Palestine to meet 'Abdu'l-Bahá with other American pilgrims, including Phoebe Hearst, Lua Getsinger and May Boles. In Akka, Kheiralla witnessed first hand the conflict between 'Abdu'l-Bahá and his brothers. Ultimately, in the conflict between 'Abdu'l-Bahá and [Mírzá Muhammad 'Alí](#), Kheiralla sided with the latter for which he was declared a Covenant-breaker.

Chase was able to go on pilgrimage in 1907, by which time he had emerged as the principal organizer of the Chicago Bahá'í community until moving out of Chicago in 1909.

Thornton Chase died on September 30, 1912 in Los Angeles, of complications following unsuccessful surgery. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was on a train en route to California at the time and went to visit Chase's grave on arrival. There he praised Chase's qualities highly, instructed

the Bahá'ís to hold [a commemoration of Chase annually at his grave](#), and encouraged Bahá'ís to visit the gravesite.

From [Star of the West](#), vol. 4, no. 11, pp. 187–8.

TO THE CENTER OF THE COVENANT: ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

May the Souls of all Mankind be a Sacrifice to Him!

O THOU David of the Promised Kingdom of GOD!

Thou Princely Leader of all Humanity!

Thou Warrior against the Tribes of Infidelity!

Thou Conqueror of Darkness and Radiator of Light!

Thou Bearer of the Banner of Divine Peace and Prosperity to the Nations!

Thou First Born in the Kingdom of Baha! Beloved of GOD and Men!

Thou First Citizen of the Royal and Holy City!

Thou Branch of the LORD, Beautiful and Glorious!

Thou Greatest Branch from the Ancient Root!

Thou Fruit-bearing Branch of the Divine Tree!

Thou Host of the Divine Table!

Thou Cup-Bearer of the Divine Knowledge!

Thou Diffuser of the Holy Fragrances!

Thou Interpreter of the Revealed Word!

Thou Liver of the Bahai Law!

Thou Establisher of the New Jerusalem descended from the Heaven of the Will of God!

Thou Builder of the Temple of the LORD!

Thou Light of the City of GOD!

Thou Brilliant Moon reflecting the Sun's full Disc of Splendor!

Thou Enlightener of the Spirits of Men!

Thou Heart of the World, sending the Blood of Truth through the arteries of Humanity!

Thou Physician of Souls, raising the dead to Life by the Elixir of the Word!

Thou Possessor of the Philosopher's Stone!

Thou Master of Transmutation!

Thou Kindler of Love and Life in the Heart of Humanity!

Thou Ambassador of Heaven and the Manifestation of Righteousness!

Thou King of servitude and Defender of the Faith!

Thou Temple of the Divine Testimony!

Thou Witness and Aim of THE COVENANT!

Thou Prince of Peace and Ensign of United Humanity!

Thou Guide of mortals to Immortality!

Thou Pathfinder of the Right Way, and Conductor of man from Earth to Heaven!

Thou Lover of GOD and Man; Exemplar of the New Humanity!

Thou Shepherd of the Sheep, and Shelter of the Birds of the Air!

Thou Keeper of the Vineyard, and Trainer of the Children of GOD!

Thou Servant of the Highest, declared by Isaiah!

Thou Right Arm of the Mighty, proclaimed by Israel!

Thou Holy One in the Hand of GOD!

Thou Lord of the Sabbath of Ages!

Thou Unique One of the Millennial Age!

Thou Lion of the Tribe of Judah!

Thou Lamb of the sacrificial Love!

Thou Baptizer of Evanescence!

Thou Sum of Spiritual and Human Perfections!

Thou MYSTERY OF GOD!

Reveal Thyself to those who can bear the Knowledge!

This grain of human dust, stirred by the Breath of the Spirit, longs for Thy

Presence, for the Life-giving touch of Thy Glorious Love. These captives of

Love yearn for Thy Nearness! These ignorant ones seek Thy instruction. These isolated ones hope for the Unity of Thy Meeting. These helpless ones trust in Thine Attraction to awaken the hearts of their friends and relatives.

O my Beloved! What can we say but to praise Thee; to thank GOD for Thee, His Greatest Gift to man; to implore Thee to pray for His Mercy upon these impotent ones, His Strength for these powerless ones, His Guidance for those erring ones, His Guard to protect us from ourselves!

Teach us to serve. Guide us in the paths of Knowledge and Wisdom.

Unite us in mutual purpose and aim, and grant us the favor of Thy personal Presence and Voice.

(SIGNED) THORNTON CHASE.

August 9, 1912, San Francisco, California.



Comments

Baha'i History - September 30. On this date in 1949, Shoghi Effendi wrote "that it is necessary to follow in full the transliteration used in God Passes By, even for the names of famous cities, etc., which have in European languages an accepted way of being spelt."

submitted 7 days ago by A35821363

September 30. On this date in 1949, Shoghi Effendi wrote [Adelbert Mühlischlegel](#) that "He fully appreciates your point about certain well-known names of Persian and other Oriental cities being spelt according to the general usage in German literature. However, he feels that it is necessary to follow in full the transliteration used in [God Passes By](#), even for the names of famous cities, etc., which have in European languages an accepted way of being spelt. Only by doing this can confusion be avoided in our Bahá'í translations and uniformity be maintained."

[30 September 1949](#) [to Dr. Adelbert Muhlschlegel]

He fully appreciates your point about certain well-known names of Persian and other Oriental cities being spelt according to the general usage in German literature. However, he feels that it is necessary to follow in full the transliteration used in *God Passes By*, even for the names of famous cities, etc., which have in European languages an accepted way of being spelt. Only by doing this can confusion be avoided in our Bahá'í translations and uniformity be maintained.

A key to pronunciation should be printed, in order to coordinate it with the German language, and also an explanation of the reason for this system being used: namely that it was adopted by an international Congress as being the most practical and universal means of spelling these oriental names in the latin alphabet.

He hopes that the fact that two people translated different parts of this book will not be noticeable in the style, and thus detract from its literary value in German?

Your labours, and those of the other friends concerned in getting this valuable history ready to be printed in German, are deeply appreciated....

In the Guardian's own handwriting:

May the Beloved of our hearts, whose Faith you are serving with distinction, zeal and loyalty, reward you a thousandfold for your constant and notable services, aid you to extend continually the range of your activities, and win still greater victories for its institutions,

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi

Bahá'í orthography is peculiar for a several reasons. Despite a purported purpose of systematizing pronunciation, Bahá'í orthography fails to accomplish this goal for the very name of the religion itself. While the accent and phonemic diacritic marks in the word "Bahá'í" indicate a three syllable pronunciation as [bəhə:'ʔi:], the [official pronunciation guide of the Bahá'í World News Service](#) gives a two syllable pronunciation of "Ba-High," /bə'haɪ/. Amin Banani's [A Bahá'í Glossary and Pronunciation Guide](#) notes that the exact realization of the English pronunciation varies. The [Oxford English Dictionary](#) has /bə'ha:i:/ ba-HAH-ee, [Merriam-Webster](#) has /bə:'ha:i:/ bah-HAH-ee, and the [Random House Dictionary](#) has /bə'ha:i:/ bə-HAH-ee, all with three syllables.

For many common names, the [Bahá'í orthographic transliteration](#) can often differ markedly from more common standard transliterations presently in use.

Bahá'í graphy	Ortho-Standard eration	Translit-Persian ciation	pronun-Arab ciation	pronun-Perso-Arab Spelling
Ádhirbáyján	Azerbaijan	[ɒzərbɔ:j'dʒɔ:n]	[ʔæðerbi:'dʒæ:n]	آذربایجان
Fátimih	Fatima	[fə:'te'me]	[fə:'tʰimæ, 'fə:tʰimæ]	فاطمه
Shoghi	Shawki	[ʰʃo:ʔi]	[ʰʃæwʔi, 'ʃawqi]	شوقی
Siyyid	Sayyid	[sej'jed]	[sæjjid]	سید



Comments

Baha'i History - September 30. On this date in 1949, Shoghi Effendi wrote, "the theocratic systems, such as the Catholic Church and the Caliphate...man-made...The Bahá'í theocracy, on the contrary, is both divinely ordained as a system and, of course, based on the teachings of the Prophet Himself."

submitted 7 days ago by A35821363

September 30. On this date in 1949, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#) "the theocratic systems, such as the Catholic Church and the Caliphate, which are not divinely given as systems, but man-made, and yet, being partly derived from the teachings of Christ and Muhammad are in a sense theocracies. The Bahá'í theocracy, on the contrary, is both divinely ordained as a system and, of course, based on the teachings of the Prophet Himself."

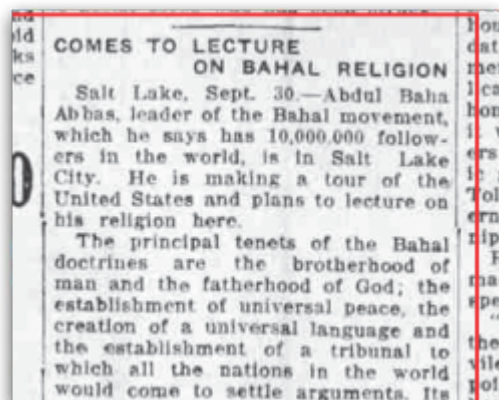


Comments

September 30. On this date in 1912, The Evening Standard of Salt Lake City introduced "'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbas, leader of the Bahá'í movement, which he says has 10,000,000 followers in the world."

submitted7 days agobyA35821363

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Comments

September 30. On this date in 1928, Dorothy Wright Nelson, who became a Senior Circuit Judge of the Ninth Circuit, Dean of the School of Law at the University of Southern California, and a member of the NSA of the U.S. from 1969 to 2009, was born in San Pedro, California.

submitted7 days agobyA35821363

September 30. On this date in 1928, [Dorothy Wright Nelson](#), who became a Senior Circuit Judge of the Ninth Circuit, Dean of the School of Law at the University of Southern California, and a member of the NSA of the U.S. from 1969 to 2009, was born in San Pedro, California.

[Dorothy Wright Nelson](#) was born in San Pedro, California, on September 30, 1928. Wright received an Artium Baccalaureus degree from the University of California, Los Angeles in 1950, and the same year she married [James Nelson](#), a longtime Los Angeles Municipal Court judge. The couple became Bahá'ís in 1954 following a suggestion to explore the religion from Donald Barrett, and eventually had two children, a daughter, Lorna, and a son, Frank.

[Dorothy Wright Nelson](#) served on the National Spiritual Assembly of the U.S. from 1969 to 2009, and [James Nelson](#) served on the National Spiritual Assembly of the U.S. from 1977 to 1999.

She received a Juris Doctor from UCLA School of Law in 1953, and a Master of Laws from the USC Gould School of Law in 1956. She was a research associate fellow at the Gould School of Law from 1953 to 1956. She was in private practice in Los Angeles, California from 1954 to 1957. She was a member of the faculty of the Gould School of Law from 1957 to 1980, an instructor from 1957 to 1958, an assistant professor from 1958 to 1961,

an associate professor from 1961 to 1967, and associate dean from 1965 to 1967. She was an interim dean from 1967 to 1969 and because of her achievement she was named Woman of the Year by Time magazine. She was a professor from 1967 to 1980. She was a dean from 1969 to 1980 and adjunct professor of law at the Gould School of Law from 1980. In 1973 there was discussion she might be nominated to the US Supreme Court in the news. In 1989, she was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws (LL.D.) degree from Whittier College.

Nelson was nominated by President Jimmy Carter on September 28, 1979, to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, to a new seat created by 92 Stat. 1629. She was confirmed by the United States Senate on December 19, 1979, and received her commission on December 20, 1979. She assumed senior status on January 1, 1995.



Comments

September 30. On this date in 1949, Shoghi Effendi wrote an individual whose visit to a Bahá'í Temple had elicited an "emotional reaction produced by disappointment and the fact you were still exalted by your happy days at the Moral Re-Armament camp."

submitted 7 days ago by A35821363

September 30. On this date in 1949, Shoghi Effendi [wrote an individual](#) whose visit to a Bahá'í Temple had elicited an "emotional reaction produced by disappointment and the fact you were still exalted by your happy days at the [Moral Re-Armament](#) camp."

[30 September 1949](#)

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter to our beloved Guardian, dated August 16, reached him and he has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

He was grieved to hear of some of the things you describe. **It shows great spiritual immaturity on the part of some of the Bahá'ís and an astonishing lack of understanding and study of the teachings.** To live up to our Faith's moral teachings is a task far harder than to live up to those noble principles the [Moral Re-Armament](#) inculcates, fine and encompassing as they are! Every other word of Bahá'u'lláh's and `Abdu'l-Bahá's writings is a preachment on moral and ethical conduct; all else is the form, the chalice, into which the pure spirit must be poured; without the spirit and the action which must demonstrate it, it is a lifeless form.

He judges, from what you say, that the friends have not or at least many of them have not, been properly taught in the beginning.

There is certainly no objection to stressing the "four standards" of the [Moral Re-Armament](#) -- though any teaching of our precious Faith would go much more deeply into these subjects and add more to them.

When we realize that Bahá'u'lláh says adultery retards the progress of the soul in the afterlife -- so grievous is it -- and that drinking destroys the mind, and not to so much as approach it, we see how clear are our teachings on these subjects.

You must not make the great mistake of judging our Faith by one community which obviously needs to study and obey the Bahá'í teachings. Human frailties and peculiarities can be a great test. But the only way, or perhaps I should say the first and best way, to remedy such situations, is to oneself do what is right. One soul can be the cause of the spiritual illumination of a continent. Now that you have seen, and remedied, a great fault in your own life, now that you see more clearly what is lacking in your own community, there is nothing to prevent you from arising and showing such an example, such a love and spirit of service, as to enkindle the hearts of your fellow Bahá'ís.

He urges you to study deeply the teachings, teach others, study with those Bahá'ís who are anxious to do so, the deeper teachings of our Faith, and through example, effort and prayer, bring about a change.

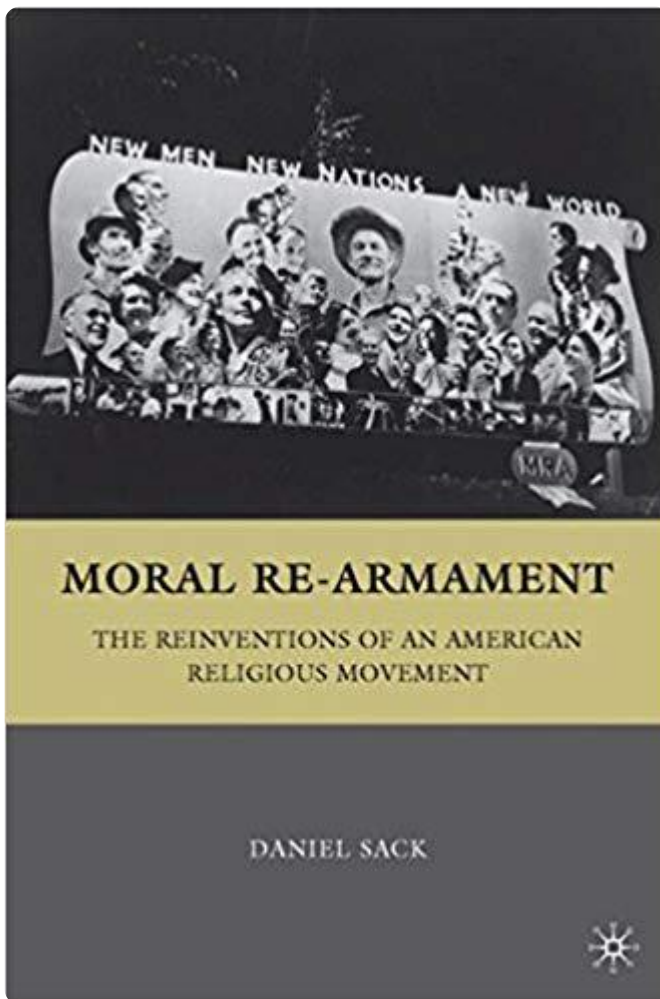
With Bahá'í love,

R. Rabbani

P.S. He feels your experience at the Temple should be regarded as in part an emotional reaction produced by disappointment and the fact you were still exalted by your happy days at the [Moral Re-Armament](#) camp. No doubt, if you visit the Temple under different circumstances, you will feel there an entirely different atmosphere -- the one you expected to find, and which does exist.

May the Almighty guide, bless and sustain you, remove all obstacles from your path, and enable you to serve, effectively and at all times, the vital interests of His Faith and of its institutions,

Your true brother,



Comments

September 30. On this date in 1950, Shoghi Effendi wrote that "it is not necessary to repeat the Bab's prayer so many times."

submitted 7 days ago by A35821363

September 30. On this date in 1950, Shoghi Effendi [wrote](#) that "it is not necessary to repeat the Bab's prayer so many times."

[1517. There Are No Special Instructions for Repeating Prayers of the Bab](#)

"Concerning the prayer for difficulty revealed by the Bab: He wishes me to inform you that it is not accompanied by any instructions for its recital. **(1)**"

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, March 6, 1937)

"Regarding your questions: The Guardian feels it is not necessary to repeat the Bab's prayer so many times. **(2)**"

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, September 30, 1950)

(1) Written in response to a question as to how often this prayer should be repeated to produce the greatest results.

(2) Written in response to a question about the repetition 114 times in the morning for 19 days of the prayer of the Bab, 'Say! God sufficeth all things above all things...' (See also: No. [1528](#))



Comments

September 30. On this date in 1968, an LSA of Chicago wrote the UHJ that "there should be one day in the year in which all of the religions should agree," to which the UHJ replied "However, this is not the underlying concept of World Religion Day, which is a celebration of the need..."

submitted 7 days ago by A35821363

September 30. On this date in 1968, an Local Spiritual Assembly of Chicago [wrote](#) the Universal House of Justice that "there should be one day in the year in which all of the religions should agree," to which the Universal House of Justice replied "However, this is not the underlying concept of [World Religion Day](#), which is a celebration of the need for and the coming of a world religion for mankind, the Bahá'í Faith itself. Although there have been many ways of expressing the meaning of this celebration in Bahá'í communities in the United States, **the Day was not meant primarily to provide a platform for all religions and their emergent ecumenical ideas.**"

[1710. World Religion Day, Purpose of](#)

Your letter of September 30, with the suggestion that 'there should be one day in the year in which all of the religions should agree' is a happy thought, and one which persons of good will throughout the world might well hail. However, this is not the underlying concept of [World Religion Day](#), which is a celebration of the need for and the coming of a world religion for mankind, the Bahá'í Faith itself. Although there have been many ways of expressing the meaning of this celebration in Bahá'í communities in the United States, ****the Day was not meant primarily to provide a platform for all religions and their emergent ecumenical ideas.** In practice, there is no harm in the Bahá'í communities' inviting the persons of other religions to share their platforms on this

Day, providing the universality of the Bahá'í Faith as the fulfillment of the hopes of mankind for a universal religion are clearly brought forth."

(From a letter of the Universal House of Justice to the Local Spiritual Assembly of Chicago, October 22, 1968)



Comments
